

The Final Round¹

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THW set maximum age limits for elected office.

A Note about the Notes

These are my notes from the final round at CDA October 2023 tournament held at Joel Barlow High School. They are limited by how quickly I could write and how well I heard what was said. I apologize for any errors, but I hope debaters will appreciate this insight: what a judge hears may not be what the debater said or thinks they said.

There are two versions of the notes. The one below is chronological, reproducing each speech in the order in which the arguments were made. It shows how the debate was presented. The second is formatted to look more like my written flow chart, with each contention “flowed” across the page as the teams argued back and forth. It’s closer to the way I take notes during the debate.

The Final Round

The final round at Joel Barlow was between the Joel Barlow team of Griffin Speck and Cade Fravel on Government and Joel Barlow team of Owen Fellows and Siddhartha Gupta on Opposition. The debate was won by the Government team on a 2-1 decision.

1) Prime Minister Constructive

- a) Introduction: cognitive decline is a fact
- b) Statement of the Resolution
- c) Definition: TH=USFG, elections at the federal level
 - i) Set a maximum age limit, to be determined
- d) Framework: what is best for future of country
- e) G1²: Age limits help insure competency
 - i) Common, e.g., air traffic controllers, police, etc
 - ii) Politicians make similarly important decisions
 - iii) Older pols struggle, e.g., McConnell, Feinstein
- f) G2: Age limits lead to more diverse representation
 - i) Old over-represented relative to share of older voters
 - (1) Avg age pols 60+, population 38
 - ii) Limits lower average age of elected officials
 - iii) Future depends on the young
 - iv) Representation should match voters
 - v) POI: If Opp provides more diverse representation should Opp win the round?

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² “G1” indicates the Government first contention, “O2” the Opposition second contention and so forth.

- vi) Can't answer until we see Opp proposal and compare to weighing mechanism
- g) G3: Older pols give power to unelected individuals
 - i) Abilities decline with age
 - (1) Less energy, so depend on staffers
 - ii) Old can stay involved in other ways
 - (1) Agree on value of experience
 - (2) Need to prevent harm from cognitive decline
 - (3) Act as mentors/advisors
 - iii) This logic applies to the power of cabinet members of an older President
 - (1) State, Department of Defense
 - iv) Age throws off checks and balances, threatens democracy

2) **Leader of the Opposition Constructive**

- a) Intro/motion
- b) Def: Gov gives no age, assume 70-75 years
- c) FW: Gov is too broad
 - i) Elected officials should match constituents
- d) O1: Candidates are not representative
 - i) Many are old and out of touch
 - ii) Age limit doesn't always fix this
 - iii) POI: Are you denying cognitive/physical ability declines with age?
 - iv) No, but people age differently
- e) O2: Current system for elections fails
 - i) Only 30% of the young vote
 - ii) Minority voter turnout also low
 - (1) E.g., Asian Americans
- f) Counterplan: Compulsory voting (CV)
 - i) No consequences for missing work
 - ii) E.g., Australia
 - (1) Elected officials average age in 40s/50s
 - iii) Older can still participate
 - iv) Young won't vote for a Diane Feinstein
 - v) POI: Aren't there many other differences between US/Australia
 - vi) Yes, but compulsory voting is the primary factor for age differences
- g) G1: Gov examples (pilots/police) are not elected officials
 - i) Jobs require quick reaction/decisions vs politicians
 - ii) With CV, fewer elected officials at risk
 - (1) E.g., Steve Scalise and cancer
- h) G2: Our POI shows no agreement on diversity
 - i) Opp CV provides more diversity for elected officials

3) **Member of Government Constructive**

- a) Intro
- b) G1: diplomats have to travel, meet, decide
 - i) Air traffic controllers are not physically active
 - (1) Similar to Senators
 - (2) No age given for Steve Scalise cancer
 - ii) Agree 70-75 likely limit

- iii) Gov can't prevent illness
- iv) Does better than Opp in dealing with age-related decline
- c) G2: Opp ignores the incumbency effect
- d) POI: CV brings in new voters, new representation?
- e) Will deal with CV later in speech
- f) FW: we agree to consider the Opp metric in addition to ours
- g) O1: issue isn't the lack of young voters
 - i) Gov solves issue of age of elected representatives
 - ii) Australia? Better to root out old officials
 - iii) POI: How does Gov increase the youth vote?
 - iv) Will discuss CV later
- h) O2: Opp doesn't really solve
 - i) Issue is elected officials, not number of voters
- i) CP: CV ignores good reasons why some don't vote
 - i) Protest against both candidates
 - ii) Dislike the system itself
 - iii) Forced voting doesn't imply informed voting
 - (1) Dilutes impact of informed voters
 - iv) Problems with Australia as an example
 - (1) Parliamentary democracy vs US Presidential democracy
 - (2) Different populations have different views
 - (3) Where is the link to solving cognitive issues

4) Member of the Opposition Constructive

- a) Intro/motion
- b) Is Australia different?
 - i) Gov reply disregards human nature
 - ii) People vote for candidates similar to themselves
 - iii) Electoral system not the issue
 - iv) POI: Where is your evidence linking CV to age of elected representatives?
 - v) People elect those similar to themselves
- c) O1: If you make it easy, most will vote
 - i) E.g., election day as a Federal holiday
 - ii) Long-term benefit to having young voices heard
 - iii) POI: How will you enforce CV?
 - iv) Like Australia, a heavy fine
 - v) No reason voting need conflict with lives or result in loss of work
- d) G1: pilots are not like the President
 - i) Pilots/police have to make split second decisions
 - ii) POI [refused, no time]
 - iii) McConnell/Feinstein elected, clearly show decline
 - (1) California voted for Feinstein, low youth voter turnout
- e) G2: Opp agrees there is a lack of age diversity
 - i) CV forces young to vote and focus on candidates
 - ii) Raises 18-30 year vote
- f) G3: everyone declines w/age, but at different rates
 - i) E.g., Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi

- ii) Age-ist to dictate max age
 - (1) Let the voters decide
 - (2) E.g., youth enthusiasm for Bernie Sanders

5) Leader of Opposition Rebuttal

- a) Intro
- b) Consider 3 key questions
- c) Will CV work?
 - i) Gov’s problem is ideology, not age
 - ii) Bernie Sanders is old but he was the young’s candidate
 - iii) Solve by getting young voters voting
- d) What is the most important argument in the round?
 - i) Opp gets more voters to vote
 - ii) CV yields a more diverse set of representatives
- e) Weighing mechanism
 - i) Gov just removes politicians
 - ii) Gov does not address under-representation by voters

6) Prime Minister Rebuttal

- a) What if CV works?
 - i) We can just “do both”, CV and age limits
 - ii) CP is not mutually exclusive with motion
- b) Which side is better for our country?
 - i) Gov plan better represents constituents
 - ii) Opp CV dilutes the vote of informed/intelligent voters
- c) Which side increases competence?
 - i) Opp ignores cognitive decline
 - (1) Gov provided many examples
 - (2) Danger of incompetent decisions
 - ii) Australia is a multi-party democracy, very different from US
- d) Which side stays true to the American philosophy of government?
 - i) US is a democracy
 - ii) Age limits already exist in the Constitution
 - iii) Opp denies the right to not vote