

The Final Round¹

Everett Rutan

ejrutan3@ctdebate.org

Smith Middle School, December 16, 2023

This House would set maximum age limits for elected officials.

A Note about the Notes

These are my notes from the final round of the Connecticut Middle School Debate League tournament at Smith Middle 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 Smith was between the Bethel teams of Akhil Sharma and Bhuvan Dasari on Proposition against Aarna Doshi, Trisha Sharma, and Radha Sinha on Opposition. The debate was won by the Opposition.

1) 1st Prop Constructive

- a) Intro/motion²
- b) Definition: “TH” is the US government
 - i) “elected officials” anyone voted into office
 - ii) “age limit” a maximum age for office holder.
- c) P1³: Old are more likely to have health issues
 - i) Many examples of age limits by occupation
 - (1) FAA limits pilots, most police, to age 60
 - (2) Law firms often require retirement at 68
 - (3) State employees at 65

***POI: Aren’t these jobs more stressful than politicians?
Senators/President under more stress than pilots***

 - ii) Age leads to significant cognitive decline
 - iii) →less able to govern, harms likely
- d) P2: Young can’t voice their opinion
 - i) Older politicians more likely to be elected

¹ Copyright 2008 Everett Rutan. This document may be freely copied for non-profit, educational purposes.

² Indicates speaker introduced themselves and stated the motion

³ “P1” indicates the Proposition first contention, “O2” the Opposition second contention and so forth.

- ii) Young can't express opinions
 - (1) Number young voters exceeds number of older voters
- iii) => Laws stagnate, decades behind the time
- iv) Age limits open way for younger politicians
- e) P3: Age limits are popular
 - i) YouGov says 77% in favor
 - (1) 76% of Democrats/79% of Republicans
 - (2) Most favor 70 as age limit, 17% say 80
 - ii) Lack of limits denies a core value of the country
- f) Re-state P1, P2, P3

2) 1st Opp Constructive

- a) Intro
 - b) Rejecting the motion is crucial for democracy
 - c) We accept the Prop definitions
 - d) P1: Motion is age discrimination against able citizens
 - e) P2: Limit restricts ability of old to express opinions
 - i) This is age discrimination
 - f) P3: Young can vote to have an impact
- POI: Why not listen to popular opinion***
Voters should make the choice, limits reduce choice
- g) Our Plan: Mandatory physical/cognitive tests, annually, all ages
 - i) No age prejudice in this
 - h) O1: Senior citizens have more experience
 - i) Xi and Biden are both over 70
 - (1) Foreign Affairs quote about their experience

POI: Isn't that experience out of date?

We will show it isn't in our contentions

- ii) Value too great to ignore
 - (1) McCain was over 80
 - (2) Experience of torture in VietNam led him to oppose CIA torture
- i) O2: Age limits neglect the ability of older politicians
 - i) Senior citizens are 17% of the population, 24% by 2050
 - (1) Limit excludes 55 million now, 84 million by 2050
 - ii) Democracy requires adequate representation
 - (1) "No taxation w/o representation"
 - (2) No elections without representation
 - iii) Limits would violate Age Discrimination Act of 1975

3) 2nd Prop Constructive

- a) Intro/motion
 - b) Re-state P1, P2, P3
 - c) O1: We agree old have more experience
 - i) That doesn't help if they can't remember it
 - d) O2: There is precedent
 - i) We don't let those under 16 drive for safety
- POI: If they know their condition, why do they run for office?***
May not know until something happens, or just stubborn

e) P1: Diane Feinstein keeps running at 90

POI: Isn't that just one individual out of millions?

National Institute on Aging quote on numbers

- i) American Association of Geriatric Psychologist find depression
- ii) Center for Disease Control defines "old" as over 65
- iii) Stress leads to depression
 - (1) Harvard study agrees
- f) P2: only 8 Presidents have been younger than 50
 - i) Few Congressmen are young
 - ii) Young are well-educated, make good decisions
 - (1) Biden certainly didn't learn about global warming in school
- g) P3: Quote that many are worried about older politicians
 - i) No limits goes against popular will
- h) Re-state G1, G2, G3

4) 2nd Opp Constructive

- a) Intro/motion
- b) Re-state O1, O2
- c) P1: clashes with O2
 - i) Age limits are age discrimination
 - ii) Our plan limits the risk of decline in young and old
- d) P2: Prop plan excludes 20% of populations, the senior citizens

POI: So aren't 80% young in the majority?

Young also vote

- i) Biden set up the National Climate Task Force at 82
 - (1) Will reduce global warming by 2030
- ii) How will politicians know they are impaired?
 - (1) Our plan tests them
- e) O1: Experience is important in any job
 - i) Voters prefer experienced candidates
 - ii) Experienced candidates are just more successful
 - (1) E.g., Biden, Xi, accomplish what younger couldn't
- f) O2: Limits exclude able politicians, discriminate
 - i) Right to run, speak, think matter
 - (1) E.g., Bernie Sanders is quick and effective
 - (2) =>shows young support those who can make an impact
 - ii) Our plan separates able from unable, whether young or old

5) Opp Rebuttal

- a) Intro: you should reject the motion
- b) Prop case/Opp case/Weighing
- c) P1: Everyone ages differently
 - i) Shouldn't discriminate against the able
 - ii) Clash with O2
- d) P2: Need a range of ages in all jobs
 - i) Limits only harm older politicians
 - ii) Young look up to the old
- e) P3: Voters now can vote out those they don't like

- i) Still we have many older politicians
 - ii) => older politicians are popular
 - iii) Polls quoted by Prop only asked a few
 - iv) Compare this to the negative impact of motion
 - f) O1: Many are living longer
 - i) Old have better idea of how the world works
 - ii) Young often ask old for advice
 - iii) Biden/Xi wouldn't be in their jobs if they were 50
 - g) O2: Motion discriminates by age
 - i) Not all old are disabled, not all young are able
 - ii) E.g., Bernie Sanders has fewer problems than younger John Fetterman
 - h) Weighing
 - i) Prop: neglects ability by forcing old out
 - ii) Opp: better decisions with guidance of older politicians
 - (1) All can give their opinions
- 6) Prop Rebuttal**
- a) Intro/motion
 - b) O1 v G2: When do young get an opportunity?
 - i) If only when old, then suffer issues of old
 - c) O2: age limits promote the greater good
 - d) Discrimination?
 - i) Balance against benefits
 - ii) Healthier, fitter politicians
 - e) G1: age problems limit ability
 - i) If not tested, wrong decisions lead to harms
 - f) G2: Already discussed clash above
 - i) Older politicians less open to new ideas
 - ii) E.g., consider your own grandparents
 - g) G3: Majority favors age limits
 - i) Public feels ignored on this issue
 - h) How can we keep up with the rest of the world?
 - i) Old are unfit, make bad decisions
 - ii) Other younger countries try new ideas
 - iii) Prop brings young, new ideas, into US politics