

Premise:

The concept of a singular national leader is simply not tenable. It did not work well with Longshanks, with Mao, with Mugabe, it cannot be expected to work, frankly, ever. The idea put forth here, in the context of American democracy, seeks to reshape the executive branch of the government, defining its role as primarily operational rather than governing, while still providing check-and-balance to the other branches. In summary,

- every other year, voters directly choose electors individually, by district and also by state (note that each voter directly chooses two separate electors, improving access to the system for minor parties)
- electors convene, initially and as needed, to choose 4 executive branch watchdogs and, as needed/moved, major cabinet officers, from among the electors themselves but are officeless, otherwise maintaining their private lives for the term
- choices require a supermajority – deadlocks are referred to a national popular vote
- the office of President is replaced by the "Demarch", a cabinet mediator and a liaison between the people and the cabinet, who has no official power
- cabinet positions have a floating term limit, as in, you can do this for a while, then you have to take some time (years) off, then you can try to come back and take it up again
- votes cast by individual electors inside an electoral convention cannot be reported outside the convention (even by the electors)
- as in the original Article II, electors cannot be office holders – meaning that a person holding a government position must be out of office at least two years before they can become an elector and then possibly an executive branch officer, and that a person cannot be an elector more than two years on/two years off

Currently, Americans are faced with choosing the everything candidate. In the case of voting for a cabinet officer, this would be changed to choosing the particular concern candidate for the particular office, so voters would not have to embrace a massive agenda, some of which may be unappealing to them.

Under this proposal, no person could be above the law, because the executive would not have a top-down structure; the need for a second-in-command is eliminated because the cabinet would be structured to handle temporary vacancies.

In addition, judicial appointments would be handled more sensibly, based on a bar association type organization providing the short list. (One might envision a scheme whereby the confirmation vote margin defines a judicial tenure – 10 years for a simple majority, 25 years for two-thirds, indefinite for over three-quarters, with term extensions only granted, upon term expiration, by the next higher approval margin.)

One of the major issues being addressed here is continuity. Currently, an incoming president replaces the whole cabinet and often engages in significant policy reversals. This alternative would eventually tend to offset changes in the executive branch to different, sometimes irregular, intervals and would better facilitate replacing office holders for misbehavior.

Another concern being addressed by this is the disconnect that public officials have with respect to the greater populace. In theory, this system would make executive office more accessible to ordinary citizens who would have a better understanding of the needs and wants of average Americans.

Note that when a faction, party or coalition manages to get their chosen candidate into office, that person can no longer take part in electoral conventions, slightly reducing the influence of the supporting group.

Section One

Electors shall be chosen, by name, from discrete ballots of registered candidates: as selected by the voters in each congressional district, in accordance with its representation; one selected by the voters on a statewide ballot; and one selected by the legislature of each state, with the assent of the governor. Elector candidates, who shall not have held office of public trust in the prior two years, may be registered on one ballot only.

The elections shall be held in the years of Congressional elections, at times chosen by each state, no earlier than March nor later than mid-June, to be certified by each state by the end of July. The chosen electors shall convene together in the last week of August thence to attend to mandated and arising matters, under an independent, non-voting presiding officer who shall have been chosen by the House of Representatives.

Section Two

A convention of electors first shall choose, by simple majority, four electors to serve as independent executive branch observer/reporters; then, as necessary and/or fitting, from the body of electors, persons to serve as major executive branch officers; each such office imposes a requirement that the person serving must be a citizen and resident for a minimum of thirty consecutive years prior; each state must thus insure, by reasonable means, that at least one of its chosen electors shall be eligible to hold office. Once an office is filled, the convention seat for that elector shall remain vacant until the next regular election, and that person shall not thereafter be eligible to participate as an elector.

When an executive position is contested or becomes vacant, the electors shall convene as soon as practicable to choose a successor. The independent observer/reporters, by consensus, may call for an office to be contested; Congress shall establish mechanisms by which the voters, the states, or the Congress itself may petition the electors to contest an office.

An office shall be filled directly by excess of a sixty-three-percent approval of the full eligible body of electors. Should the electors, after deliberation, find themselves unable to reach the required majority, candidates who can muster more than thirty-one-percent support from electors, one of whom may be the contested incumbent, shall be put forth to a popular vote, which shall be held not more than ten weeks thence. If the subsequent vote is not resolved by at least a full popular majority, the electors must reconvene upon the same question.

Any elector who shall receive communication from outside a convention shall be removed and not return; all records of the votes of the electors shall be private, to be destroyed upon adjournment of a convention; Congress shall establish severe penalties for violations of convention security.

Section Three

Congress shall establish not less than eight and not more than twenty major executive branch cabinet offices for the management of specific aspects of the government, together encompassing the scope of public operations. The scope of each cabinet office shall have natural overlap of responsibilities with other cabinet offices, such that the executive branch can maintain function in times of transient vacancies.

In addition to the specific major offices, there shall be a central cabinet officer, styled as the "Demarch", whose duties shall be to represent the people to the government, to represent the government to the people, to mediate areas of conflict within the executive branch, and to coördinate response to Congressional action, which may include referral for reconsideration, in full or by section, of submitted measures, as directed by majority executive branch agreement; Congressional actions which are not referred for reconsideration shall take force.

The appointment of justices, to be drawn from lists supplied by a duly formed independent body of legal scholars and jurists, shall be presented to the Senate for its approval upon two-thirds executive branch consensus.

Section Four

Each of the major executive officers are entitled to serve not more than nine years of a fourteen year period. Upon the initial convention of electors, a cabinet officer whose term is due to expire within the two year term shall be an immediate mandated order of business. Once an office has been filled, for the first sixteen months, any petition to the electoral college to contest that office must be duly accompanied by just cause.