

The SIU Public Policy Institute and San Diego State University thank those who came together to develop these recommendations and thank Sol Price who made this forum possible.

The group included:

Henry Bellmon
U.S. Senator 1969-1981
Republican, Oklahoma

Hank Brown
U.S. Senator 1991-1997
Republican, Colorado

David Durenberger
U.S. Senator 1978-1995
Republican, Minnesota

Jim Sasser
U.S. Senator 1977-1995
Democrat, Tennessee

Paul Simon
U.S. Senator 1985-1997
Democrat, Illinois

Joseph Tydings
U.S. Senator 1965-1971
Democrat, Maryland

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Former U.S. Senators Forum

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and the
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Usually in politics someone who has left office does not have the opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way to current public policy matters. That is often to the detriment of our nation. But one man wants that to change.

Sol Price, a San Diego business leader and someone who promotes good public policy and is highly active in his community, agreed to fund a session where we could bring former members of the United States Senate together to discuss issues that are important to the future of our nation and world. The idea is simple: bringing together former members who don't plan to seek public office again should allow for more open discussion and less partisan posturing that comes with running for office.

Thanks to Sol Price, six of us who served in the Senate—three Democrats and three Republicans—met under the auspices of San Diego State University and the Public Policy Institute of Southern Illinois University to consider two matters: How the process might be improved in the Senate and what can be done to encourage more interest in international policy by members of the House and Senate and by the public.

The results are solid recommendations that the majority of us agreed to during the forum.

I hope you will read these recommendations and give consideration to where you might be able to make a difference.

Cordially,

Paul Simon
Director
SIU Public Policy Institute



A PBS special was taped as a capstone to the forum. Pictured are (left to right) Sen. David Durenberger (R-MN), Sen. Henry Bellmon (R-OK), Sen. Joseph Tydings (D-MD), Moderator Carole Kennedy, Sen. Paul Simon (D-IL), Sen. Jim Sasser (D-TN) and Sen. Hank Brown (R-CO).

ON THE PROCESS IN THE SENATE

- Eliminate proxy voting in committees except by unanimous consent for extreme circumstances, such as a death in the family.
- Reduce the number of committees and subcommittees on which Senators can serve.
- Have committees meet in the mornings and begin legislative sessions at noon so that when the full Senate meets, the “world’s greatest deliberative body” can more fully meet that description.
- Move to biennial budgeting.
- Reexamine legislative compensation, always a delicate matter. But failure to pay adequately discourages some of great ability from seeking membership in the Senate, and also causes at least a few experienced members with accumulated insight to leave the body when they should stay.
- Recognize that negative television and radio commercials diminish public confidence in their elected representatives. Require television and radio stations that broadcast attacks on candidates and /or officeholders to provide equal time to opponents to respond, free of charge.
- Reform campaign financing.



A panel discussion with the senators, Durenberger, Bellmon, Tydings, Simon, Sasser and Brown.

ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS:

- Get more editorial writers and reporters to travel abroad.
- Write letters to legislative leaders urging them to:
 - Lead trips overseas for new members
 - Push members to travel at least once every two years.
- Have businesses and business organizations, such as local chambers of commerce and the Farm Bureau, push Senators and House members to travel overseas.
- Encourage Senators and House members to meet with visiting officials of foreign nations.
- Encourage the delivery of distance learning to other nations and vice versa.

