A third term for President Barack Obama? It could happen

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It’s a Republican’s nightmare: A third term for President Barack Obama.

That would be possible under legislation being pushed by a Democratic congressman.

U.S. Rep. Jose Serrano, D-N.Y., is sponsoring a resolution that would repeal the 22nd Amendment, which sets a two term limit for the office of president.

No, it’s not likely to win approval in the House, where Republicans hold a majority. The bill was introduced Jan. 4 and was referred to the House Judiciary Committee, where it is expected to languish.

But the idea has its supporters, including Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and former House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, who have both sponsored similar legislation in the past.

Former President Bill Clinton also backs the proposal, saying presidents should be allowed to serve a third, non-consecutive term.

“I’ve always thought that should be the rule,” Clinton said during an appearance on MSNBC’s Morning Joe in November. “I think as a practical matter, you couldn’t apply this to anyone who has already served, but going forward, I personally believe that should be the rule.”

“The 22nd Amendment is an insult to American voters who are wise and well-informed,” Vander Jagt said at the time.

Reagan himself initially supported term limits but changed his mind during his second term in the White House.

"In thinking about it more and more, I have come to the conclusion that the 22nd Amendment was a mistake," Reagan said in an interview with Barbara Walters in 1986.

Serrano currently has no co-sponsors for his bill, and he’s had little success in prior attempts to abolish presidential term limits. He’s introduced similar legislation in every new term since 1997, during the administrations of Clinton, George W. Bush and Obama.

Experts said the 22nd Amendment is likely to remain, even if Serrano can rally support for his bill in the House.

Ronald Feinman, a professor of history and government at Florida Atlantic University, said repealing the amendment would take a vote by both houses of Congress and approval by three-fourths of the 50 states.

"Politically, it's a very difficult thing to repeal an amendment," said Feinman, who blogs about politics at TheProgressiveProfessor.com.

Franklin D. Roosevelt remains the only president to serve more than two terms, winning election to a third term in 1940 and a fourth in 1944. The 22nd Amendment was passed by Congress in 1947 and took effect in 1951.

"Whether you like Barack Obama or not, eight years is long enough," said Feinman, who described himself as a Democrat and an Obama supporter. "We should not have presidents for life."