

The U.S. Constitution established a federal government with powers that are limited and separated among three branches. Combined with the Bill of Rights, it committed our nation to the rule of law, the protection of fundamental human rights, and a concept called federalism—the notion that powers not granted to the federal government are reserved to the states or to the people. I am a member of the [10th Amendment Task Force](#), which is dedicated to protecting federalism by ensuring that Congress does not legislate on matters that should be left to local governments or the American people.

Like many Americans, I have grown increasingly concerned that Congress, the President, and federal courts have too frequently exceeded their constitutional powers. I believe the health care law signed by President Obama in 2010, which for the first time in our history mandates that nearly every American purchase a certain product, is a prime example of Washington lawmakers exceeding the powers provided to them by the Constitution. Likewise, the Supreme Court and other federal courts have repeatedly overstepped their constitutional role by legislating from the bench. At the same time, in recent years we have witnessed the federal bureaucracy grow more cumbersome, inefficient, and restrictive—misusing taxpayer dollars and undermining our economy.

I believe we must return to the Founders' vision of limited government spelled out in the Constitution. Upon regaining the majority in the House of Representatives, Republicans committed to limiting actions in the House to only those explicitly authorized by the U.S. Constitution. When introducing legislation House members are now required to cite a specific provision in the Constitution that authorizes Congress to take the proposed action. In addition, House Republicans reasserted the essential role of the Constitution by reading it in its entirety on the House floor for the first time in history. I believe these were good first steps toward rededicating Congress to faithfully hold fast to the Constitution.

Further, I believe constant oversight of the activities of the federal government is critical to identifying—and putting an end to—abuses in Washington. As such, I will continue to support efforts in the House to hold our members and federal agencies accountable to the American people.

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