women and their achievements throughout history. It is also a time to reaffirm our commitment to ending discrimination and violence against women and pursuing policies to guarantee the basic rights of every woman and girl.

Over the past century, tremendous progress has been made in achieving full gender equality. Internationally, women account for 80 percent of the 70 million micro-borrowers, 67 countries have gender equity laws on their books, and women have been elected to government leadership roles in every country. Here in the U.S., women continue to play an important role in caring for their families, but now, more than 50% of college students are women and nearly 60% of the American workforce is female. I am also extremely proud that today in the United States, more women than ever before are being elected to public office. I was honored to serve with the first woman Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, and the 18 women Members of Congress from California.

But there is still more work to be done. At this very moment, there are too many parts of the world where women and girls are denied access to education, lack adequate health care, die from preventable causes, or are targets of sexual and physical violence. Even here, in our own country, women on average still earn 77 cents for every dollar earned by their male counterparts. In the midst of our recession, pay parity is no longer solely a question of gender equity; it is an issue of economic necessity.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a cosponsor of Rep. JAN SCHAKOWSKY's International Women's Day Resolution. And while this day is of unique importance, I believe that we can and must treat every day as an opportunity to fight for gender equality around the world.

SMALL BUSINESS PAPERWORK MANDATE ELIMINATION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2011

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I have heard complaints from farmers and small business owners across the 2nd congressional district who believe that having to file this onerous 1099 form for any payment greater than $600 is an unnecessary bureaucratic nightmare that needs to be repealed. Small businesses are the engines that drive our nation's economy, and they should focus on creating jobs, not filling out paperwork. Now is the time to reduce the obstacles for small business growth, not increase them, and repealing this provision would help accomplish that goal.

If action is not taken, the 1099 reporting requirements set to be enacted in 2012 will bury our country's farmers and small businesses owners in excessive paperwork. It ultimately will raise the cost of doing business and create an economic burden through increased prices for goods and services. Meanwhile, the IRS will be swamped in 1099 Forms while other vital enforcement activities are not met.

It is undisputed that these requirements are unacceptable. There is nearly unanimous agreement in Congress around repealing this onerous provision. Already the Senate has taken action and approved bipartisan legislation that would fix this problem. Nevertheless, the House Majority has decided to poison the legislation at hand with an offset containing a severe tax increase aimed squarely at middle income Americans. It would raise taxes on middle-income families who simply get a new job, work extra shifts, or receive a bonus for good performance. It is insensitive and even more onerous due to the fact it would place a greater burden on working families trying to purchase health care.

While I support repealing the overly burdensome 1099 requirements—and while I will reluctantly vote for this legislation—I find the choice that the Majority has put in front of us to be truly objectionable. The current offset will raise taxes and will hurt Americans' access to health care. This choice is unacceptable, and I look forward to working with the Senate and the Administration to ensure that this divisive and unnecessary attack on middle-income Americans is taken out of the final legislation and that a more suitable offset is found.

WE THE PEOPLE

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 8, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the We the People Act. The We the People Act forbids federal courts, including the Supreme Court, from adjudicating cases concerning state laws and polices relating to religious liberties or ''privacy,'' including cases involving sexual practices, sexual orientation or reproduction. The We the People Act also protects the traditional definition of marriage from judicial activism by ensuring the Supreme Court cannot abuse the equal protection clause to redefine marriage. In order to hold federal judges accountable for abusing their powers, the act also provides that a judge who violates the act's limitations on judicial power shall either be impeached by Congress or removed by the president, according to rules established by the Congress.

The United States Constitution gives Congress the authority to establish and limit the jurisdiction of the lower federal courts and limit the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The Founders intended Congress to use this authority to correct abuses of power by the federal judiciary.

Some may claim that an activist judiciary that strikes down state laws at will expands individual liberty. Proponents of this claim overlook the fact that the best guarantor of true liberty is decentralized political institutions, while the greatest threat to liberty is concentrated power. This is why the Constitution carefully limits the power of the federal government over the states.

In recent years, we have seen numerous abuses of power by federal courts. Federal judges regularly strike down state and local laws on subjects such as religious liberty, sexual orientation, family relations, education, and abortion. This government by federal judiciary causes a virtual nullification of the Tenth Amendment's limitations on federal power. Furthermore, when federal judges impose their preferred polices on state and local governments, instead of respecting the polices adopted by those elected by, and thus accountable to, the people, republican government is threatened. Article IV, section 4 of the United States Constitution guarantees each state a republican form of government. Thus, Congress must act when the executive or judicial branch threatens the republican governments of the individual states. Therefore, Congress has a responsibility to stop federal judges from running roughshod over state and local laws. The Founders would certainly have supported congressional action to reign in federal judges who tell citizens where they can and can't place manger scenes at Christmas.

Mr. Speaker, even some supporters of liberalized abortion laws have admitted that the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision, which overturned the abortion laws of all fifty states, is flawed. The Supreme Court's Establishment Clause jurisdiction has also drawn criticism from across the political spectrum. Perhaps more importantly, attempts to resolve, by judicial fiat, important issues like abortion and the expression of religious belief in the public square increase social strife and conflict. The only way to resolve controversial social issues like abortion and school prayer is to restore respect for the right of state and local governments to adopt polices that reflect the beliefs of the citizens of those jurisdictions. I would remind my colleagues and the federal judiciary that, under our Constitutional system, there is no reason why the people of New York and the people of Texas should have the same policies regarding issues such as marriage and school prayer.

Unless Congress acts, a state's authority to define and regulate marriage may be the next victim of activist judges. After all, such a decision would simply take the Supreme Court's decision in the Lawrence case, which overturned all state sodomy laws, to its logical conclusion. Congress must launch a preemptive strike against any further federal usurpation of the states' authority to regulate marriage by removing issues concerning the definition of marriage from the jurisdiction of federal courts.

Although marriage is licensed and otherwise regulated by the states, government did not create the institution of marriage. Government regulation of marriage is based on state recognition of the practices and customs formulated by private individuals interacting in civil institutions, such as churches and synagogues. Having federal officials, whether judges, bureaucrats, or congressmen, impose a new definition of marriage on the people is an act of social engineering profoundly hostile to liberty.

It is long past time that Congress exercises its authority to protect the republican government of the states from out-of-control federal judges. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the We the People Act.

THE K–9 COMPANION CORPS ACT OF 2011

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 8, 2011

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that would establish a