

credit union community both nationally and within my great State of New York.

For the past 9 years, Mr. Vadala has been balancing his time as a NAFCU Board Member including this past year as the Chairman of the NAFCU Board, along with his responsibilities as President/CEO of The Summit Federal Credit Union. With over 67,000 members in northern New York, The Summit FCU has fostered many savings programs targeted to today's youth by teaching the importance of saving through targeted programs ranging from kindergarten through college. Mr. Vadala has worked hard to promote financial education programs and has armed his members with protecting themselves against identity theft.

Throughout his tenure as Chairman of the NAFCU Board of Directors, Mr. Vadala worked tirelessly to enhance the federal credit union charter by working with Congress for regulatory relief legislation for credit unions. As Chairman, he has also helped maintain NAFCU's status as a leading credit union trade association.

Mr. Vadala has proven himself to be a true gentleman. I have seen him walking the halls of Congress many times carrying the torch for the credit union industry and he has testified before this Congress on multiple occasions on issues important to credit unions. Although there might have been occasion where we may have not agreed, this did not deter Mr. Vadala from continuing his loyal service to NAFCU.

Many would think that the work he does for credit unions would be enough to fill a day, but that is not the case. He is also a dedicated family man, as well. Mr. Vadala and his family have played a huge role in fundraising for the United Way in upstate New York. He was also the former Chairperson of the March of Dimes Walk America. His work with these organizations has made a huge impact on thousands of lives in New York and beyond. Also, Mr. Speaker I could refer to Mr. Vadala without mentioning that he is one of the biggest Syracuse Orange fan that I have ever had the privilege to meet. And I would like to share one more "Go Orange" with Mr. Vadala as he concludes his time on the NAFCU Board.

I rise today to congratulate Mr. Mike Vadala on his fine work throughout his illustrious tenure as Chair of NAFCU. I have worked with him on issues that are important to the credit union community in the past and I am committed to continuing this relationship. With more than 20 years experience in the credit union community, there is no doubt in my mind that our good friends at NAFCU will feel a great void once he steps down. Congratulations on your retirement from the NAFCU Board Mr. Vadala.

RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that Congress act now to raise the minimum wage. In 2004, 37 million Americans lived below the poverty line, a 1.1 million increase from the year before. In 2004, 13 million children in America lived below the poverty line and more than one in six children was poor.

Yet in the richest country on earth, there is no guarantee that a full time job will lift a family out of a situation of dire poverty and need. That's because full-time year round minimum wage earnings of \$5.15 an hour equal leaves a family of three 31 percent below the poverty line. A minimum wage worker, working 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year earns \$10,700 a year, \$5,000 below the poverty line for a family of three.

The current minimum wage fails to provide enough income to enable minimum wage workers to afford adequate housing. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, an employed full time worker would need to earn an hourly wage of at least \$15.78 to afford a two-bedroom rental nationally. At the current minimum wage, a family with two full time year round minimum wage earners would fall short of this standard by \$5.48 collectively. It's no wonder that so many families struggle to put a roof over their heads and food on the table. A 2005 study found that 40 percent of adults seeking emergency food aid were employed.

We can directly help these families and children by increasing the federal minimum wage. It is estimated that over 7 million workers would receive an increase in their hourly wage if the minimum wage were raised to just \$7.25 an hour, as proposed in Congressman MILLER's legislation, the Fair Minimum Wage Act. An additional 8.2 million workers earning up to a dollar above the new minimum wage would also benefit.

What kind of Nation have we become when work ceases to be a bridge out of poverty? A nation in which a basic full time job doesn't protect against hunger, homelessness, or poverty. It is a travesty that in the face of these realities, the realities that working Americans confront daily, Congress has not raised the minimum wage since 1997. We can and must change this by increasing the minimum wage now.

RECOGNIZING CHAD THOMAS STEPHENS FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Chad Thomas Stephens, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 395, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Chad has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. He has camped at the H. Roe Bartle Scout Reservation for 6 years and attended the National Jamboree in 2005 while serving as the Senior Patrol Leader for Heart America Troop 1211. Over the many years Chad has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Chad Thomas Stephens for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO BRITTANY GILBERT

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Brittany Gilbert, who had the great honor of presenting her exhibit, "John James Audubon: The American Woodsman Taking a Stand," at the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery before the National History Day contest. Brittany, a student at North Kingstown High School, and 18 other students were chosen out of more than 2,000 participating finalists.

The National History Day program allows students to create exhibits, documentaries and performances, by using their critical thinking and research skills in the subject of history. A basic knowledge of history is essential for our Nation's children to become informed participants in our democracy, and National History Day is promoting history education in Rhode Island and throughout the Nation. National History Day empowers teachers to improve history education so that every student will have historical knowledge and skills to contribute to the public good of our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Brittany, and may she have continued success in all her future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO THE MACOMB COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE AND THE MT. CLEMENS REGIONAL SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend the Macomb County Clerk's office and the Mt. Clemens Regional Social Security office for an innovative new partnership which is expected to improve customer service, reduce unnecessary administrative work, and save Social Security over \$257,000 over the next 5 years alone.

As you know, the Immigration Reform and Terrorist Prevention Act required the Social Security Administration to verify all birth records before issuing Social Security cards. In most offices, that means Social Security staff have to go in person to the county clerk's office with stacks of birth records, which the clerk's staff then manually verify. The process is time-consuming and labor-intensive for both offices, and sometimes results in unnecessary delays for people waiting for new or replacement Social Security cards.

Macomb County Clerk Carmela Sabaugh, in cooperation with Social Security Administration District Manager William Seaman, has implemented a very different system. Under Macomb County's system, Social Security employees are able to instantly verify birth record authenticity using a secure Internet page available only to Social Security employees with federal security clearance. The first-in-the-nation Macomb County process builds on the digital imaging for vital records that Sabaugh implemented last year. It's faster and easier, but no less effective and secure than the old way.

I'm proud that our local offices took the initiative and came up with a better way to implement this new requirement. Thanks to their innovation, staff will spend more time serving the public and less time processing paperwork. That's better for Social Security, better for the Clerk's office, and best of all, better for all the Macomb County residents they serve.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WE THE PEOPLE ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

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 policies 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 policies on state and local governments, instead of respecting the policies 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 policies 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 co-sponsor the We the People Act.

RECOGNIZING JACOB LEE WIER FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jacob Lee Wier, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 395, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jacob has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. He has camped at the H. Roe Bartle Scout Reservation for six years and earned the rank of Firebuilder in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Over the many years Jacob has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jacob Lee Wier for his accom-

plishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CHILDREN'S HEALTH FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION AUTHORITY RESTORATION ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to introduce legislation to restore the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) authority to regulate marketing to children under the age of 18 in order to help eliminate an epidemic of overweight and obesity that studies link to pervasive advertising of junk food to the Nation's youth. A similar provision has been introduced as part of a larger bill in the Senate, and former President Clinton is taking a leading role in efforts to control the rapid increase in overweight and obesity in children. Yet Congress has failed to take decisive action, despite definitive studies that show that childhood obesity has become one of the Nation's most serious health issues, creating a surge in debilitating diseases we are seeing for the first time in kids.

The Centers for Disease Control reports that 12.5 million children and adolescents, ages 2–19, are overweight, a rate that has tripled in the last 40 years. As a result, the incidence of Type 2 diabetes in children, a disease that is mainly associated with adults, has become widespread in recent years. Overweight children have a more than 70 percent chance of being overweight adults, putting them at risk for many serious health conditions, such as high blood pressure, asthma and heart disease. Many of these children are obese in part because they watch so much television, on the average, over 2 hours a day. However, a study by the congressionally chartered Institute of Medicine (IOM) found extraordinary growth in new food products targeted to children, from just 52 new product introductions in 1994 to close to 500 just last year. Significantly, the IOM report finds that advertisements during children's programming feature foods high in fat, with little to no nutritional value.

The problem is even greater in programming geared toward African American television consumers, adults and children alike. A summer 2005 survey of programming on Black Entertainment Television (BET) found that 66 percent of the ads were for fast food commercials. The study monitored commercials during the afternoon hours, when children watch cartoons and "tween" shows. The WB Network and Disney Channel were also monitored in the study. During that time slot, over 1,000 ads were shown on all three channels. Only 34 percent of ads on the WB promoted fast foods, and none at all on the Disney channel. McDonald's was the leading fast food advertiser on BET. Further, 82 percent of advertisements on BET were for soda, with the WB at 11 percent. The Disney Channel accounted for only 6 percent of soda advertisements. Advertisements for snacks accounted for 60 percent of BET programming, 40 percent on the Disney Channel and none