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"The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the federal government are few and defined…" – James Madison, Federalist Paper No. 45

Limited government. Separation of powers. Federalism. Even though these terms never appear in the U.S. Constitution, they have defined the proper and intended function of American government since its creation. Each is derived from the principle of enumerated powers -- outlined in the Constitution by the Founding Fathers – to establish a federal government of limited size and scope.

As the principal author of the Constitution, James Madison sought to ease fears that the new national government, under consideration at the time, would impose too much authority on its citizens. He emphasized that adoption of the Constitution would form a government of strictly limited and defined power. And in doing so, the tenets of individual liberty, personal responsibility and limited government were solidified.

It is ironic that the shape and function of our government today is exactly what Madison and our Founding Fathers warned would constitute a direct threat to the principles upon which America was created. With each generation, government has become larger and more intrusive, leaving today's workers, taxpayers and future generations with trillions-of-dollars in public debt.

This expansion of government must end. In its place, we must restore the principle of limited government articulated by our Founding Fathers – the same principle that has been so blatantly overlooked in recent years amid debates on bailouts, stimulus spending, health care reform and other new entitlements. Each has added to our national debt, imposed new regulation and increased individual reliance on the federal government. In some cases, direct constitutional questions have been raised.

One of the more notable examples of this intrusion and disregard for the Constitution is illustrated in the recently enacted health care law, specifically the mandate that every American purchase health insurance or face financial penalty. This is a first. Never before has the federal

government required that an individual purchase a product from another individual or enterprise, which is why several states are challenging the constitutionality of this mandate in pursuit of alternative reforms.

Confronting today's challenges is no easy task, but in writing the Constitution, our Founders provided a blueprint to help guide us forward and ensures government, regardless of the circumstance, functions as it was intended: a guardian of basic rights. That is why I am supporting several initiatives in Congress intended to reduce regulation and limit the level of intervention that has seemingly become commonplace, including:

- H.R. 450, the Enumerated Powers Act: Requires each Act of Congress contain a concise and definite statement of the Constitutional authority relied upon for enactment;
- H.J. Res. 57, the Preserving Capitalism in America Amendment: Proposes an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to prohibit the U.S. government from owning stock in private companies;
- H.J. Res. 1, the Balanced Budget Amendment Act: Proposes a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution – a measure that would restore fiscal discipline in government and encourage responsible federal spending.

The foundation of legitimate government, as envisioned by the Founders, is well within reach but we must first restore our commitment to strict observance of the Constitution – a commitment that I intend to maintain. There is certainly a purpose and defined function for government, as long as its power is limited and its actions are consistent with its origins.