

Rep. Justin Amash's Floor Statement on H.R. 2, Repealing the Job-Killing Health Care Law Act

The Founders were keenly aware of the threat a powerful and overbearing federal government poses to our liberty. With this concern in mind, they wrote a Constitution that created a federal government with limited powers. Later they proposed the Tenth Amendment, which reserves to the states or the people powers not delegated to the federal government.

The debate we're having today goes beyond health care---although there's no doubt health care coverage is an important and difficult issue. What we're discussing today goes to the core of our Constitution's design. It asks Members of Congress whether we take constitutional limits on our power seriously.

We have all witnessed everyday Americans' renewed interest in the Constitution. As they have asked tough questions about the constitutionality of this law, the law's proponents have tried to dress up their answers in constitutional language.

They say Congress's power to tax upholds this law. But when this law originally was being considered, those same proponents were the first to claim the bill included no new taxes.

They try to find support in Congress's power to regulate interstate commerce. If forcing Americans to start commerce is the same as regulating existing commerce, it would have been news to the Founders.

Finally, grasping at clauses, they claim Congress can do anything that is in the "general welfare" of the country.

If this law is constitutional---if Congress has such broad power---our limited federal government will have become limitless---and all without changing our Constitution or the approval of the Americans whom it protects. It is not just for the courts, it is our duty as a Congress to pay attention to the Constitution and its limits on our power.

I urge we repeal this unconstitutional law.