

part of the Department at any time. In our view, the existence of the Office of Violence Against Women should not be subject to changing political winds.

This legislation has the support of numerous domestic violence organizations all over our nation. In the 106th Congress, it garnered the support of almost 150 bipartisan cosponsors in short time. Representative MORELLA and I are hopeful that the 107th Congress will acknowledge the importance of this bill by passing it into law as soon as possible.

Tragically, there is no indication that domestic violence will disappear any time soon. Congress should signal its commitment to the fight against domestic abuse by establishing a permanent Office of Violence Against Women.

THE RE-INTRODUCTION OF THE
FAITH-BASED LENDING PROTECTION ACT

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, each day our Nation's religious institutions quietly go about performing critical social programs that serve as lifelines to individuals and families in need. Besides providing places of worship, religious institutions also serve their communities by operating outreach programs such as food banks soup kitchens, battered family shelters, schools and AIDS hospices. To families in need, these programs often provide a last resource of care and compassion.

Yet, in spite of the clear social good that these programs provide to communities across America, we are faced with the growing reality that religious institutions are finding it increasingly difficult to secure the necessary capital resources at favorable rates that enable them to carry on this critical community work.

Mr. Speaker, today I am re-introducing legislation that I believe will help ensure that religious institutions have available all the financial resources necessary to carry out their missions of community service. The Faith-Based Lending Protection Act, which enjoys bipartisan support, seeks to amend the Federal Credit Union Act by clarifying that any member business loan made by a credit union to a religious nonprofit organization will not count toward total business lending caps imposed on credit unions by Federal law.

Each year credit unions loan millions of dollars to nonprofit religious organizations, many located in minority and/or lower income communities. Historically, these loans are considered safe and help sustain critical social outreach programs. Without legislative action, Mr. Speaker, these religious institutions will find it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to secure the necessary funds under favorable terms to allow them to continue their work. I urge my colleagues to join me in this legislative effort.

INTRODUCTION OF THE YOUNGER
AMERICANS ACT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to re-introduce, along with my colleague Mrs. ROUKEMA, the Younger Americans Act. Last September, we introduced this bill with our counterparts in the Senate and a vast national coalition of supporters including former Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell and America's Promise, the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, the National Urban League, America's Promise, the Child Welfare League of America, the United Way, the National Mental Health Association, and others.

We knew then that we would not have enough time in the 106th Congress to pass the legislation. But we did want to signal the strong support of a bipartisan coalition in both the House and Senate and of a broad array of national and grassroots organizations. I look forward now to working with them to pass this legislation in the 107th Congress. This is landmark legislation that will dramatically increase after-school opportunities for youth by providing them with adult mentors, education, sports, and volunteer activities.

As any parent or teacher knows, the best way to keep kids out of trouble and help them learn and grow is to keep them busy and give them opportunity. Today's bill is an historic opportunity to dramatically expand safe and exciting programs for children and youth after school, a time when too many kids suffer from a lack of activity and adult supervision. A recent Urban Institute study found that one in five young people age 6-12 are left without adult supervision after school and before their parents come home from work, a critical period during the day to keep youth both positively engaged and out of trouble.

Thirty-five years ago, Congress made a decision to help seniors and passed the Older Americans Act. In doing so, Congress launched a series of highly effective local efforts that have improved and enriched the lives of our nation's elderly. It helped pay for senior centers, Meals on Wheels, and community service programs like Green Thumb. For too long, however, Congress has ignored the needs of our nation's young people. It has failed to make the issues of young people a priority and has failed to make an adequate investment in their development and well-being.

Our new bill attempts to correct that oversight. Today, we seek to repeat the success of the Older Americans Act by funding a national network of high-quality programs tailored to the particular challenges faced by youth today. Too often, we find that public programs for young people focus on the problems of youth and promote piecemeal policies that seek to redress negative behaviors like juvenile delinquency or teen pregnancy. But the evidence shows that the most promising approaches to helping young people are those that foster positive youth development, build social and emotional competence, and link young people with adult mentors. This is the future of youth social program in the 21st century and it is an approach we seek to advance through this legislation.

The Younger Americans Act will help coordinate and fund youth-mentoring, community service through volunteerism, structured academic and recreational opportunities, and other activities aimed at fostering the positive educational and social development of teens and pre-teens. Under the bill, the federal government would distribute funds by formula to community boards that would oversee the planning, operation, and evaluation of local programs. Funding for local programs in the initial year would be \$500 million, and would rise to \$2 billion in 2006, in addition to matching funds provided by local and state governments and the private sector.

To qualify, each local program would be required to adopt a comprehensive and coordinated system of youth programs with the following five general components: ongoing relationships with caring adults; safe places with structured activities; access to services that promote healthy lifestyles, including those designed to improve physical and mental health; opportunities to acquire marketable skills and competencies; and, opportunities for community service and civic participation. Thirty percent of funds would be targeted to youth programs that address specific, urgent areas of need such as urban and rural communities that currently lack sufficient access to positive and constructive opportunities.

I want to thank all of the members of the coalition behind this bill for bringing us together. I applaud their work on this legislation and the work that they do every day in each of our local communities. I want to express special appreciation to all of the young people from these associations, who have rightly played such a key role in drafting and advocating for this legislation.

Congress has enacted many worthwhile programs to help young people. But the bill we are introducing today has a different message. Our bill responds to the tremendous desire of young people to have the greatest opportunity possible to be active, creative, and productive citizens in our society, rather than receiving society's help only after they are in trouble. Kids are asking to be given a chance to make a difference in their own lives. We are saying that that is exactly what Congress can and should do. I am confident we can make that happen. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this legislation.

INTRODUCTION OF THE IDENTITY
THEFT PREVENTION ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Identity Theft Prevention Act. This act protects the American people from government-mandated uniform identifiers which facilitate private crime as well as the abuse of liberty. The major provision of the Identity Theft Prevention Act halts the practice of using the Social Security number as an identifier by requiring the Social Security Administration to issue all Americans new Social Security numbers within five years after the enactment of the bill. These new numbers will be the sole legal property of the recipient and the Social Security Administration shall be forbidden to divulge

the numbers for any purposes not related to Social Security Administration. Social Security numbers issued before implementation of this bill shall no longer be considered valid federal identifiers. Of course, the Social Security Administration shall be able to use an individual's original Social Security number to ensure efficient administration of the Social Security system.

Mr. Speaker, Congress has a moral responsibility to address this problem as it was Congress which transformed the Social Security number into a national identifier. Thanks to Congress, today no American can get a job, open a bank account, get a professional license, or even get a drivers' license without presenting their Social Security number. So widespread has the use of the Social Security number become that a member of my staff had to produce a Social Security number in order to get a fishing license!

One of the most disturbing abuses of the Social Security number is the congressionally-authorized rule forcing parents to get a Social Security number for their newborn children in order to claim them as dependents. Forcing parents to register their children with the state is more like something out of the nightmares of George Orwell than the dreams of a free republic which inspired this nation's founders.

Congessionally-mandated use of the Social Security number as an identifier facilitates the horrendous crime of identity theft. Thanks to the Congressionally-mandated use of the Social Security number as a uniform identifier, an unscrupulous person may simply obtain someone's Social Security number in order to access that person's bank accounts, credit cards, and other financial assets. Many Americans have lost their life savings and had their credit destroyed as a result of identity theft—yet the federal government continues to encourage such crimes by mandating use of the Social Security number as a uniform ID!

This act also forbids the federal government from creating national ID cards or establishing any identifiers for the purpose of investigating, monitoring, overseeing, or regulating private transactions between American citizens, as well as repealing those sections of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 that require the Department of Health and Human Services to establish a uniform standard health identifier. By putting an end to government-mandated uniform IDs, the Identity Theft Prevention Act will prevent millions of Americans from having their liberty, property and privacy violated by private-and-public sector criminals.

In addition to forbidding the federal government from creating national identifiers, this legislation forbids the federal government from blackmailing states into adopting uniform standard identifiers by withholding federal funds. One of the most onerous practices of Congress is the use of federal funds illegitimately taken from the American people to bribe states into obeying federal dictates.

Mr. Speaker, of all the invasions of privacy proposed in the past decade, perhaps the most onerous is the attempt to assign every American a "unique health identifier"—an identifier which could be used to create a national database containing the medical history of all Americans. As an OB/GYN with more than 30 years in private practice, I know well the importance of preserving the sanctity of the physician-patient relationship. Oftentimes,

effective treatment depends on a patient's ability to place absolute trust in his or her doctor. What will happen to that trust when patients know that any and all information given to their doctor will be placed in a government accessible data base?

Many of my colleagues will claim that the federal government needs these powers to protect against fraud or some other criminal activities. However, monitoring the transactions of every American in order to catch those few who are involved in some sort of illegal activity turns one of the great bulwarks of our liberty, the presumption of innocence, on its head. The federal government has no right to treat all Americans as criminals by spying on their relationship with their doctors, employers, or bankers. In fact, criminal law enforcement is reserved to the state and local governments by the Constitution's Tenth Amendment.

Other members of Congress will claim that the federal government needs the power to monitor Americans in order to allow the government to operate more efficiently. I would remind my colleagues that in a constitutional republic the people are never asked to sacrifice their liberties to make the job of government officials a little bit easier. We are here to protect the freedom of the American people, not to make privacy invasion more efficient.

Mr. Speaker, while I do not question the sincerity of those members who suggest that Congress can ensure citizens' rights are protected through legislation restricting access to personal information, the only effective privacy protection is to forbid the federal government from mandating national identifiers. Legislative "privacy protections" are inadequate to protect the liberty of Americans for several reasons. First, it is simply common sense that repealing those federal laws that promote identity theft is more effective in protecting the public than expanding the power of the federal police force. Federal punishment of identity thieves provides cold comfort to those who have suffered financial losses and the destruction of their good reputation as a result of identity theft.

Federal laws are not only ineffective in stopping private criminals, they have not even stopped unscrupulous government officials from accessing personal information. Did laws purporting to restrict the use of personal information stop the well-publicized violation of privacy by IRS officials or the FBI abuses by the Clinton and Nixon administrations?

Second, the federal government has been creating property interests in private information for certain state-favored third parties. For example, a little-noticed provision in the Patient Protection Act established a property right for insurance companies to access personal health care information. Congress also authorized private individuals to receive personal information from government databases in the copyright bill passed in 1998.

Perhaps the most outrageous example of phony privacy protection is the Clinton Administration's so-called "medical privacy" proposal, which allow medical researchers, certain business interests, and law enforcement officials' access to health care information, in complete disregard of the Fifth Amendment and the wishes of individual patients! Obviously, "privacy protection" laws have proven greatly inadequate to protect personal information when the government is the one providing or seeking the information.

The primary reason why any action short of the repeal of laws authorizing privacy violations is insufficient is because the federal government lacks constitutional authority to force citizens to adopt a universal identifier for health care, employment, or any other reason. Any federal action that oversteps constitutional limitations violates liberty because it ratifies the principle that the federal government, not the Constitution, is the ultimate judge of its own jurisdiction over the people. The only effective protection of the rights of citizens is for Congress to follow Thomas Jefferson's advice and "bind (the federal government) down with chains of the Constitution."

Mr. Speaker, those members who are unpersuaded by the moral and constitutional reasons for embracing the Identity Theft Prevention Act should consider the overwhelming opposition of the American people toward national identifiers. The overwhelming public opposition to the various "Know-Your-Customer" schemes, the attempt to turn drivers' licenses into National ID cards, the Clinton Administration's Medical Privacy proposal, as well as the numerous complaints over the ever-growing uses of the Social Security number show that American people want Congress to stop invading their privacy. Congress risks provoking a voter backlash if we fail to halt the growth of the surveillance state.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I once again call on my colleagues to join me in putting an end to the federal government's unconstitutional use of national identifiers to monitor the actions of private citizens. National identifiers threaten all Americans by exposing them to the threat of identity theft by private criminals and abuse of their liberties by public criminals. In addition, national identifiers are incompatible with a limited, constitutional government. I, therefore, hope my colleagues will join my efforts to protect the freedom of their constituents by supporting the Identity Theft Prevention Act.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MILITARY RETIREE HEALTH CARE TASK FORCE ACT

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to introduce the Military Retiree Health Care Task Force Act of 2001. This legislation will establish a Task Force that will look into all of the health care promises and representations made to members of the Uniformed Services by Department of Defense personnel and Department literature. The Task Force will submit a comprehensive report to Congress which will contain a detailed statement of its findings and conclusions. This report will include legislative remedies to correct the great injustices that have occurred to those men and women who served their country in good faith.

Let us not forget why we are blessed with freedom and democracy in this country. The sacrifices made by those who served in the military are something that must never be overlooked. Promises were made to those who served in the Uniformed Services. They were told that their health care would be taken