unbundling and wholesale rules within 60 days. According to the Court, ''This deadline is appropriate in light of the commission's failure, after eight years, to develop lawful unbundling rules, and its apparent unwillingness to adhere to prior judicial rulings.'' Given the situation and the impact that it has on my rural district and consumers across the country, I fully support this decision.

The time has come for the FCC to stop playing games and adopt a set of rules that adheres to the guidelines set forth by the 1996 Telecommumcations Act. I support free market principles and feel as though Congress painted a clear pro-competition, pro-growth picture for the FCC. I also echo the sentiments of many other members of the House who feel that it is time to put some legitimacy and continuity in telecommunications regulations.

For the sake of growth, development, and the rule of free market principles in the telecommunications industry, I would like to see each and every member of the House support this ruling.

IN HONOR OF MR. AND MRS. RICHARD A. RUTKOWSKI

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 2004

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Richard A. Rutkowski and Regina J. Rutkowski for their years of service and dedication to their community. Mr. and Mrs. Rutkowski were honored by the Richard A. Rutkowski Association at the 25th Anniversary Gala Dinner-Dance on Saturday, January 17, 2004, at the Hi-Hat Caterers in Bayonne, New Jersey.

Richard A. Rutkowski is former mayor and two-term council member-at-large for the City of Bayonne. In 1992 and 1993, Mr. Rutkowski was elected by fellow mayors to the 25 member executive board of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities. Mr. Rutkowski is currently a director of the Bayonne Chapter of the National Conference for Community and Justice, an active member of the American Polish Veterans, Assumption Catholic War Veterans Post no. 1612, and Bayonne Elks Lodge #434.

Mr. Rutkowski has served on a number of boards of directors for committees, civic, religious, professional and ethnic organizations He is a former member of the Parish Council and school board member at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, where he served as the chairman of the Parish Centennial Committee. Mr. Rutkowski has also served as assistant cubmaster of Pack 19.

For all his remarkable accomplishments, dedication to his community, and leadership, Mr. Rutkowski has received numerous awards, including the YMCA Award, Citizen of the Year Award from the Bayonne Kiwanis Club in 1990, and National Conference for Community and Justice Humanitarian Award in 2001.

Born and raised in Bayonne, Mr. Rutkowski attended Saint Peter's Prep and received his bachelor's degree from Saint Peter's College. Mr. Rutkowski received a master's degree from Stevens Institute of Technology.

Regina J. Rutkowski was born in Poland, and is a survivor of the Nazi occupation. After years of suffering, her family relocated to England and then to the United States. Mrs. Rutkowski attended New Jersey City University where she graduated Summa Cum Laude, and received her bachelor's degree in History.

Mrs. Rutkowski has been involved in a variety of charitable, social and civic organizations in which she has held several positions, such as Bayonne's marshall of the Pulaski Day Parade in 1997, trustee of the Bayonne Historical Society, and honorary chair on the 25th Anniversary of the Pro Arte League of the Kosciuszko Foundation.

Mrs. Rutkowski is an active member in numerous organizations, including the Bayonne Pulaski Memorial Committee, Polish-American Heritage Committee of Bayonne, Polish-American Citizens Club, and Royal Arcanum.

Mrs. Rutkowski is a member of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, where she serves on the Parish Council. She is an usherette and former member of the parish's Centennial Committee. She currently serves as treasurer of the Mount Carmel Guild.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard A. Rutkowski are the proud parents of three sons, Richard Jr., Stephen, and Robert, and grandparents of three wonderful children, Stephen, Alexa and Robert.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Richard A. Rutkowski and Regina J. Rutkowski for their outstanding leadership, tireless work and service in the community, and commitment to their fellow man.

WE THE PEOPLE ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 2004

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 cosponsor the We the People Act.