Captain Rattan's accommodation request was granted. I am grateful to Secretary Gates and then-Secretary of the Army Pete Geren for reviewing and ultimately granting the accommodation. They have both shown tremendous foresight in recognizing that our Nation's 21st-century fighting force should incorporate all aspects of American society.

Sikhs fought bravely in defense of our Nation in both World Wars, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. At present, Sikhs serve in the militaries of Great Britain, Canada and India, among others, and as United States peacekeepers, often working closely with American troops in troubled regions.

Throughout our Nation's history, the military has succeeded in training individuals from diverse backgrounds and communities to achieve one unifying goal, to protect and defend the United States. By denying Sikh officers the ability to appropriately practice their religion while serving, the Army denies itself access to the important talents and abilities of these individuals who are willing to fight and die for our Nation.

No American should have to choose between his religion and service to our country. At a time when this country is fighting two wars overseas, we can ill afford to turn away skilled, accomplished and patriotic young Americans like Captain Rattan who wish to serve. Captain Rattan's achievement today underscores the importance of preserving diversity in our Armed Forces. It is a testament to one of the most fundamental values, freedom of religion upon which our Nation was founded and which makes the United States a beacon of hope and liberty throughout the world. I wholeheartedly congratulate him on this very important occasion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

STATES' RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, you know, we have seen for some time the Federal Government, since 1913, usurping States' rights. This Federal Government, this Congress, the House and Senate with the complicity of both Republican and Democratic Presidents, sending to the States unfunded mandates demanding that they come up with millions and billions of dollars that they didn't have, just out of the blue. We've now come up with one that many States believe will bankrupt them.

How did we get here? Well, in 1913 the constitutionally sanctioned process of electing Senators was changed by the 17th Amendment. That was put in the Constitution after great debate, and what it required was that the State legislatures, the States select—not the overall population of the State—but the State legislatures would select the U.S. Senators. That was a check and balance on the Federal Government's usurpation of States' rights because if any U.S. Senator came up here and voted such an unfunded mandate upon the State, he was going to quickly be recalled, as has happened before.

But the appeal—and I don't know how I would have voted on the 17th Amendment because it sounds so good. You know what, we ought to let all the people in the State elect our U.S. Senator. And once that was done, once that amendment was passed, there was no further check on States' rights and the protections afforded in the 9th and 10th Amendments that reserved all power not specifically enumerated, as it says here, in the 10th Amendment: ''The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.''

Both Republicans and Democrats have violated that concept. And what could the States do about it? After 1913, they had no power to do anything about it. They didn't have an Army as big as the United States, and we didn't want secession again. We didn't want another civil war. It should be done legislatively and diplomatically and within legislative bodies, however they were called, and within the framework of the U.S. Constitution.

Well, the Constitution, when it was drafted, addressed that point, and it's very clear. And perhaps it took a government to run away, as one State representative or Governor said, The mother of all unfunded mandates. The States—there are 39 of them that have so far said, We're not going to take this anymore. We're going to do something, whether it's going to be legislative, litigation, whatever. We're going to stop this. But the truth is, it may take years to get through the courts to the Supreme Court. It may take years.

So here's the solution: it was in the Constitution all along. It's called article V of the United States Constitution. Now we know that article V has been used many times by this first line, ''The Congress, whenever two-thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary''—we know that's been used many times. The House and Senate agree we need an amendment, and so they call for the amendment to be produced. But something—I haven't been able to find it. It's been done before, but it can be. It's there. But here it is: ''Or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two-thirds of the several States shall''—it means Congress shall, Congress shall, that it's not any choice that Congress has.

If two-thirds of the States apply and say, We want a convention—not a Constitutional Convention because this can be restricted by the Congress—but an amendment—one amendment would be all that was necessary to return a check and balance on the Federal Government, give the States what the 9th and 10th Amendments reserved to them. Two-thirds of the States make application, Congress shall call in a convention for proposing amendments—not rewriting the Constitution. And this is a procedural issue that the Supreme Court has always said, with regard to procedural issues, That's political. It's procedural. Congress, you do it however you want to. We're not touching that. We're not going to issue a decision. That's what this should be. This is how we return control and some sense of order to the States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HEALTH CARE: THE CRISIS OF CONSENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCOTTER. So this is what change looks like. If he were here, Mr. Speaker, in this time of momentous national distress, I would remind the President of the United States that he is not a leader of a party or an ideology. He is the leader of our country, one founded not to ameliorate others but to inspire the world.

As families lose their jobs, their homes and their dreams for their children, as our troops fight in sacrifice in foreign fields for our liberty and security, President Obama's obsessive-compulsive pursuit of an abominable government takeover of health care has defied the public's objections, despoiled this, the people's House, and further alienated Americans from their representative government.

As President Obama's campaign mantra of ''hope and change'' has degenerated into tax and hate, reputable surveys prior to this vote report: the public overwhelmingly thinks that the U.S. Government is broken. Only 21 percent of the public thinks it is being governed with its consent. Only 26 percent of the public trusts the Federal Government most of the time or always; 56 percent of Americans think the Federal Government has become so large and powerful that it poses an immediate threat to the rights and freedoms of ordinary citizens; 70 percent believe the government and big business typically work together in ways that hurt consumers and investors; and 71 percent of Americans think the Federal Government is a special interest.