

March 24, 2009

House Must Vote to Protect Second Amendment Rights on Omnibus Lands Bill

Judge's Decision Last Week Creates Big Void in Altmire Language,

Vote NO on Previous Question vote on Rule for H.R. 146 to Allow House to Restore Gun Rights

Dear Colleague:

The House Rules Committee has blocked any amendment from being offered to the Omnibus Public Lands bill, including an amendment to protect Americans' Second Amendment gun rights when on federal park lands and refuges.

Last Thursday, a federal judge struck down existing federal regulations that expressly protected Americans' ability to carry firearms on public lands if in accordance with the laws of the State in which the national park or wildlife refuge is located.

A great deal has been said about the Altmire language that was added to the Omnibus Public Lands Bill to prevent the ban of hunting and fishing on certain types of federal lands. However, last week's ruling by Washington, D.C.-based U.S. District Court Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly creates a giant hole in the current Altmire language.

I ask you to join with me in insisting that the House be permitted to vote during consideration of the Omnibus Public Lands Bill to restore Americans' Second Amendment rights that were single-handedly struck down by a lone federal judge.

Please call upon House leaders to allow this vote on the Omnibus Public Lands Bill because the judge's ruling makes the current Altmire language seriously inadequate. The Omnibus Public Lands Bill is the best vehicle to fix what this federal judge has done. If we're going to pass a 1,200 page omnibus that expands federal lands in our country, Congress must also protect Americans' Second Amendment rights while on these lands.

House leaders must change the closed rule written by the Rules Committee to allow for this vote to protect the Second Amendment, or this matter will be made the subject of the Previous Question vote during debate on the closed rule. Either way, Representatives will have the opportunity to vote to restore Americans' Second Amendment rights.

Sincerely,

Doc Hastings
Ranking Republican Member
House Natural Resources Committee