

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPUBLICANS

CONGRESSMAN DOC HASTINGS, RANKING MEMBER

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## **Hastings, Bishop Call for Vote to Protect Second Amendment Rights on Public Lands**

*Omnibus Lands Bill is Best Vehicle to Reverse Last Week's Ruling by D.C. Judge*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today, House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings and National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Subcommittee Ranking Member Rob Bishop called upon Democrat Leaders to immediately hold a vote to restore Americans' Second Amendment rights on public lands and wildlife refuges. Ranking Member Hastings has proposed an amendment to the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act to restore the Federal Government's policy of allowing Americans to carry concealed firearms in national parks and wildlife refuges in accordance with State law.

"Congress must not allow one federal judge to single-handedly deny Americans' their Second Amendment rights on federal land," **said Ranking Member Hastings.** "For months, Democrat leaders in the House and Senate have played a game of parliamentary Twister to block the House from voting on any amendments to the massive 1200-page, \$10 billion Omnibus Lands package. Following this display of judicial activism, Democrats must stop their blockade and allow a vote to restore and protect Second Amendment rights on federal lands. There is now a giant hole in the Altmire language and I have an amendment that will fix it."

"Republicans on the House Natural Resources Committee have insisted time and time again that legislation securing these rights be put into law," **said Subcommittee Ranking Member Bishop.** "Gun owners should not lose their Second Amendment rights simply because they might be standing or driving on federal land. In fact, when Americans travel through the Virginia suburbs just outside of D.C., they frequently drive on Park Service land. It's ridiculous for people to be subject to two different sets of regulations simply because their car moved a few feet. The judge's decision last week was wrong. Democrat leaders now have a responsibility to finally hold a vote and set policy, not leave it to the whims of bureaucrats and agenda-driven federal judges."

### **Background**

*In January, with the support of over half of the Members of the United States Senate, the Federal Government announced a common sense policy to legally allow citizens to carry concealed firearms in national parks and wildlife refuges in accordance with State law.*

*Last week, House and Senate leaders added an amendment, sponsored by Representative Jason Altmire, to the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act that protects hunting and*

*fishing on certain parts of federal land. When this amendment was added, Americans had the right to carry concealed firearms on public lands.*

*However, on March 19, 2009, Washington, D.C.-based U.S. District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly single-handedly decided to block the Federal Government's common sense policy to allow citizens to carry concealed firearms in national parks and wildlife refuges in accordance with State laws. As Hastings said, "There is now a giant hole in the Altmire language."*

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