

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPUBLICANS

CONGRESSMAN DOC HASTINGS, RANKING MEMBER

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## **Natural Resources Committee Republicans Call on House Leaders to Allow Amendments to the Omnibus Lands Bill**

*Congress Must Restore the Second Amendment Rights of Americans on Public Lands*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – *House Natural Resources Committee Republicans today delivered remarks on the House floor calling on Democrat leaders to allow amendments to the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act, including an amendment to protect Americans' Second Amendment rights on public lands. Full video of the remarks follow:*

- [House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings](#) (WA-05)
- [National Parks, Forest and Public Lands Subcommittee Ranking Member Rob Bishop](#) (UT-01)
- [Congresswoman Cynthia Lummis](#) (WY-At large)
- [Congressman Adrian Smith](#) (NE-03)

*Full transcript of Ranking Member Doc Hastings' floor speech:*

“Mr. Speaker, for weeks and weeks, Democrat leaders in the House and Senate have engaged in parliamentary contortions to block every Representative of both parties from being able to offer even one amendment to the 1200 page, 10 billion dollar omnibus lands package that contains over 170 individual bills.

Since over 100 of these bills were never voted on by the House, this giant piece of legislation needs careful review in a fair and open process. Yet, fair and open consideration is precisely what Democrat leaders have denied this House.

Today, the House Rules Committee will meet to decide how the most recent Senate-passed omnibus lands bill will be debated and voted upon in the House. While there are many areas of this bill that need improvement, there are several that rise to a serious level of concern:

- addressing prohibitions against American-made energy on public lands that would create new jobs in these tough economic times;
- ensuring our border security by making certain that provisions in this bill don't ban the use of vehicles and other technology to patrol the border;
- ensuring that public lands continue to be open to public enjoyment, which includes wheelchair access for the disabled that would be banned under this bill, as well as access by Americans using bicycles or motorized bikes and vehicles for recreation;

- and, an area of the bill that rises to very high level of concern after a federal judge's ruling last week, is the protection of Americans' Second Amendment gun rights on public lands.

Specific amendments have been filed with the Rules Committee to address each of these issues. Democrat leaders should now provide the House with a chance to vote on them.

Specifically, the House must act on the Omnibus Lands Bill to immediately protect the Second Amendment rights of Americans.

Last week, Democrat leaders in the House and Senate added the Altmire amendment to the Omnibus Lands Bill to prevent the federal government from banning hunting and fishing on certain types of federal land.

At the time this amendment was added, the right of Americans to carry concealed firearms on park lands and wildlife refuges, in accordance with State law, was already recognized in federal regulations. However, last Thursday, a U.S. District Court Judge based in Washington, DC single-handedly decided to block this Second Amendment policy.

Now, there is a giant hole in the current Altmire language and Congress must fix it. Congress must not allow one federal judge to single-handedly deny Americans their Second Amendment rights on federal land.

I have introduced an amendment, along with Rob Bishop of Utah, to the Omnibus Lands Bill that would write into law the very protections struck down by this one federal judge.

The House must vote on this amendment to repair the big void in the current Altmire language contained in the Omnibus Lands Bill.

No excuses. No delays. No waiting for another day, or another bill. The Omnibus Lands Bill is the best place to fix what this federal judge has done.

If we're going to pass a 1200 page bill that dramatically expands federal lands in our country, Congress must also protect Americans' Second Amendment rights while on these lands.

The Constitution and Second Amendment should not be pushed aside by an activist judge and a complacent Congress.

House leaders must allow an immediate vote on the Hastings-Bishop amendment to the Omnibus Lands Bill to protect the gun rights of Americans."

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