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Hastings Praises Senate Passage of Amendment to Restore Americans' Second Amendment Rights on Public Lands

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings released the following statement regarding passage of Senator Coburn's amendment to restore Americans' Second Amendment rights on public lands:

"As I've said repeatedly, Congress now has the responsibility of correcting the Administration's refusal to restore Americans' Second Amendment rights on public lands. Fortunately, a bipartisan group of Senators, including Majority Leader Reid, took a step in the right direction yesterday by voting for the Coburn amendment.

"However, when the House and Senate work together in conference to write the final bill, members will have the opportunity to prove if they truly support Americans' Second Amendment rights. If anyone can guarantee that the Coburn amendment remains in the legislation, it's Majority Leader Reid."

Background

In January, with the bipartisan 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.

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 commonsense policy.

Unfortunately, the Department of the Interior announced on April 17, 2009 that it will not appeal the federal court ruling that prohibits carrying loaded guns in national parks and wildlife refuges.

On March 24, 2009, Ranking Member Hastings, Representative Bishop and other members introduced legislation (H.R. 1684) to restore Americans' Second Amendment rights on public lands and wildlife refuges. Today, the bill has 52 cosponsors.

On May 12, 2009, the Senate voted 67-29 in favor of Senator Coburn's amendment that ensures that law-abiding visitors to National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service public lands can possess firearms in accordance with federal, state, and local law.

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