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Legislature Supports Right to Bear Arms

(JUNEAU) – The Alaska House passed a resolution today urging President George W. Bush to reverse the anti-gun-ownership policies of the Clinton administration.

“The Alaska State Constitution makes it clear that every individual, law-abiding Alaskan has the right to keep and bear arms but that isn’t enough,” said Sen. Dave Donley (R-Anchorage), sponsor of the resolution. “The Founding Fathers believed that the right to keep and bear arms was the birthright of every American.”

But President Clinton and his Justice Department were extremely hostile when it came to private ownership of guns,” said Donley. “The Clinton Justice Department contended that the Second Amendment only protected gun ownership for members of the National Guards. Individual citizen’s guns, including hunting rifles and shotguns, could simply be taken away.”

Senate Joint Resolution 17 asks President Bush to instruct the Department of Justice to modify its policies to acknowledge that the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects the right of individual Americans to own guns. In addition, Alaskan voters overwhelmingly approved an amendment to the Alaska State Constitution in 1994 to specifically guarantee the rights of Alaskans as individuals to keep and bear arms.

“This resolution sends a clear and forceful message to the federal government that Alaskans will defend the Second Amendment freedoms of every individual, law-abiding American,” said Donley.

SJR 17 was drafted in consultation with the National Rifle Association. The resolution passed the House with a vote of 35 –2, and a notice of reconsideration was filed.

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