

News Release

# Roscoe Bartlett

Representing the 6th District of Maryland

Committees: Armed Services, Science, & Small Business



For Immediate Release:  
June 26, 2008

Contact:

Monica DeLong at 202-225-2721  
or Monica.DeLong@mail.house.gov

## **Congressman Bartlett Applauds Today's Landmark U.S. Supreme Court Decision Striking Down the D.C. Gun Ban**

**Washington, D.C. – Congressman Roscoe Bartlett stated, “The Supreme Court finally addressed the meaning of the Second Amendment and rightfully decided that the Second Amendment is written to protect the fundamental and individual right to keep and bear arms. The Constitution clearly protects an individual’s right to have a gun. If we are to honor and uphold our Constitution, this right cannot be infringed.”**

In *District of Columbia v. Heller*, the Supreme Court, in a 5 to 4 decision, today handed down a decision that declared that the Second Amendment protects an individual's right to own guns for self-defense, striking down the District of Columbia's ban on handgun ownership as unconstitutional. The Court stated that the protection was not just the right of the states to maintain militias. The majority opinion, written by Justice Antonin Scalia, signified a monumental change in federal Second Amendment jurisprudence. The decision went even further than what the Bush administration had counseled. It said that the government may impose some restrictions on gun ownership, but that the District's extremely strict ban went too far under any interpretation. The Supreme Court also held that it is unconstitutional to require that shotguns and rifles be kept disassembled or unloaded or outfitted with a trigger lock.

Congressman Bartlett stated, “Protecting citizens’ constitutional rights has been very important to me. The Second Amendment affords citizens’ the right to keep and bear arms. This Congress, I reintroduced ‘The Citizens’ Self-Defense Act,’ which reaffirms this right and puts criminals on notice that law abiding citizens can and will use deadly force, if necessary, to defend themselves, their family and their home.”

Congressman Bartlett was a cosigner of an *amicus curie* brief that was sent from certain Members of Congress to the Supreme Court regarding the case that was decided today. The brief defended the citizens’ fundamental individual right to bear arms and explained the historical meaning of the Second Amendment as understood by Congress.

The Congressman also was a cosigner of a letter to President Bush respectfully requesting that the President direct the Department of Justice to prepare a new brief that more accurately reflects the time-honored view that the Second Amendment provides law-abiding Americans with the right to keep and bear arms. Congressman Bartlett has consistently cosponsored bills to protect citizens' Second Amendment rights, and these bills include "The District of Columbia Personal Protection Act," which would deny the District any authority to enact laws or regulations that discourage or eliminate the private ownership or use of firearms. He also cosponsored this bill when it was introduced in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress and 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.

####