



March 12, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
S-230 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Majority Leader and Mr. Speaker:

Conservatives for Property Rights, a coalition of conservative and libertarian organizations dedicated to first principles of private property rights, asks that the FY 2018 Omnibus Appropriations bill include language to repeal the Waters of the United States, or WOTUS, rule devised by the Obama Environmental Protection Agency and the Corps of Engineers.

CPR emphasizes the central importance of private property in all its forms — physical, personal, and intellectual. The right to private property ranks among the unalienable rights the Founders referenced in the Declaration of Independence. Thus, property rights should not be considered a conservative or liberal issue, although this coalition approaches property rights from a conservative philosophical perspective.

Our coalition urges you to include Section 431 of the House Interior Appropriations measure or comparable language in order to restore the pre-2015 interpretation of the Clean Water Act. Under WOTUS, more than 60 percent of the nation's streams, along with millions of acres of wetlands, is inappropriately brought under federal jurisdiction. This rule would compound the regulatory vagueness and expand the EPA's and the Corps' discretion far beyond what is reasonable. The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals recently lifted a nationwide stay that had held at bay this federal taking of private property and state property. Thus, it is imperative that Congress act with dispatch to relieve this threat to fundamental property rights.

Whereas President Obama vetoed 2016 Congressional Review Act legislation that would have blocked the overreaching WOTUS rule, President Trump will support this measure. His EPA last summer sought to withdraw the misguided regulation. But now, circumstances dictate immediate congressional action.

In conclusion, Conservatives for Property Rights strongly supports measures to repeal the WOTUS rule through the vehicle of the FY18 Omnibus Appropriation. Thank you for considering our input.

Sincerely,

James Edwards
Executive Director
Conservatives for Property Rights

Jason Pye
Vice President of Legislative Affairs
FreedomWorks

Seton Motley
President
Less Government

Norm Singleton
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Matthew Kandrach
President
Consumer Action for a Strong Economy

cc: Senate Appropriations Chairman Thad Cochran
Senate Energy and Water Development Chairman Lamar Alexander
House Appropriations Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen
House Energy and Water Development Chairman Mike Simpson