

With the holiday season upon us, and the end of the year fast approaching, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 3326 -- the Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2010. With the passage of this bill, NRA-ILA wraps up its appropriations work for the year.

Our efforts on the huge spending bill were rewarded with the restoration of a longstanding rider to protect M-1 carbines, M-1 Garands, M-14s, .22 caliber rifles, and others from being destroyed.

This language also includes a prohibition on the destruction of small arms ammunition and components, and a response to the short-lived concern over destruction of spent brass casings earlier this year.

Amtrak Update: As we reported in last week's Grassroots Alert, on December 10, the U.S. House of Representatives approved an NRA-backed amendment, introduced by U.S. Senator Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), to allow Amtrak travelers to transport firearms in checked baggage where checked baggage service is available. The Wicker amendment was included along with several government agencies' appropriations bills in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010.

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Hunting Threatened In Mojave National Preserve: The Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), in concert with the Sierra Club and other anti-hunting organizations, has filed a petition with the California Fish and Game Commission to ban most hunting in the Mojave National Preserve, including rabbit and varmint hunting. What hunting remains (resident game birds, deer, and bighorn sheep) would be restricted. The "Petition for Rulemaking Regarding Hunting in the Mojave National Preserve" blames hunters for the declining population of the desert tortoise, a threatened species under the state's Endangered Species Act. CBD filed a similar petition in 2003, but the Commission did not act on it. The Commission will likely consider the CBD's petition next week and could schedule a hearing on it early next year.

The NRA Online Advisory Panel: A few weeks ago, we launched a brand new service -- the NRA Online Advisory Panel -- a community of our most active and loyal supporters.

Help Defend Your Gun Rights One Click At A Time: We have a revolutionary yet simple tool that will allow you to stay connected to NRA-ILA and raise valuable contributions to defend our Second Amendment rights without spending a dime! It's the NRA-ILA Toolbar, and you can make a difference by downloading and using it. NRA-ILA Grassroots Minute Video

STATE ROUNDUP (Please note the only items listed below are those that have had recent action. For other updates on state legislation, please go to the state legislation section at www.NRAILA.org, and check each week's issue of the Grassroots Alert.")

CALIFORNIA: Hunting Threatened on Mojave National Preserve The Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), in concert with the Sierra Club and other anti-hunting organizations, has filed a petition with the California Fish and Game Commission to ban most hunting in the Mojave National Preserve, including rabbit and varmint hunting. What hunting remains (resident game birds, deer, and bighorn sheep) would be restricted. The "Petition for Rulemaking Regarding Hunting in the Mojave National Preserve" blames hunters for the declining population of the desert tortoise, a threatened species under the state's Endangered Species Act. CBD filed a similar petition in 2003, but the commission did not act on it. The commission will likely consider the CBD's petition next week and could schedule a hearing on it early next year.

The petition contains the flimsiest of evidence that hunting in the preserve is the cause or even a contributing factor of the decline in the tortoise population. In fact, statistics confirm that vehicular traffic and increased tourism within the designated critical habitat of the tortoise have increased substantially since 1994 when the preserve was established. Those activities are believed to be the leading causes of tortoise mortality. Further, there is sufficient research to suggest that predation by ravens and coyotes are also taking its toll on this

protected species. The objective of the petition is not to protect and enhance the tortoise population. Rather, it is an attempt by this coalition of anti-hunting organizations to permanently end hunting in the Mojave National Preserve. CBD was also behind the ban on the use of lead ammunition for hunting big game within the range of the California condor, and earlier this year, CBD attempted unsuccessfully to extend that ban to all game species.

Please take a few minutes to contact the commission and ask that they deny the petition. Please address and mail comments to:

John Carlson, Jr., Executive Director
California Fish and Game Commission
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1320
Sacramento, CA 95814
fgc@fgc.ca.gov