

Rothman Votes to Protect Private Property Rights

Congressman

NEWS RELEASE

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ROTHMAN VOTES TO PROTECT PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

(Washington, DC) - Today, on the floor of the United States House of Representatives, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-Fair Lawn) cast an important vote to protect the private property rights of all Americans. He supported a measure, H.R. 3058, the 2006 Transportation, Treasury and Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill which includes statutory language limiting the scope of the recent United States Supreme Court decision in the case of Kelo v. City of New London. The bill passed the House on a vote of 392 to 31 and is expected to be approved overwhelmingly by the Senate and signed into law by the President shortly.

"This is an important victory for property owners," said Rothman. "This bill prevents federal funds from being used for any project that uses eminent domain powers to take private property unless those powers are employed only for a public purpose. And most importantly, this new law makes it clear that eminent domain cannot be used for economic development projects that primarily benefit private entities."

As Mayor of the City of Englewood, New Jersey in the 1980's, Rothman saw first hand that eminent domain can be an effective tool for local governments to use to clean up blighted areas, as long as that power is used only for a public purpose and on a very limited basis. Earlier this year, in a 5-4 decision in the Kelo case, the U.S. Supreme Court reinforced the Constitutional basis for certain uses of eminent domain but, in Rothman's opinion, justified Congress's interest in clarifying its own position on this issue.

"I am pleased that this new law will protect our rights by making it clear that eminent domain can only be used under very limited circumstances and never to primarily benefit a developer, corporation, or any other private entity," said Rothman. "None of us would want our homes or businesses to be taken by the government just to benefit a private company or companies. This new law will help make sure that doesn't happen."

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