

Senator Stevens Protests--

Black powder regs

Sen. Ted Stevens has protested the proposed new regulations on the sale of black powder which he says are contrary to congressional intent and are an invasion of privacy for American citizens.

The proposed rules of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, for the implementation of a law raising from five to 50 pounds the amount of black powder a citizen could buy at one time,

would require anyone buying up to 50 pounds to complete and file a form.

"I can assure you that the intent of Congress when we increased the five pound limitation on black powder was not to impose more paperwork on law-abiding Americans than was required prior to the liberalization of the law," Stevens said in a letter to bureau director Rex Davis.

The senator also pointed out that both the House and Senate reports on the bill specifically state that the law would be implemented at no cost to the government, while printing and processing a form would require government funds.

He said that Bicentennial events have heightened the interest among Americans in the use of black powder firearms and that the 50 pound exemption is limited to black powder for sporting, recreational and cultural use in antique weapons.

Many Alaskans use black powder for historically oriented recreation, and several groups are organized for this purpose in Alaska, he said.

Stevens asked that the period for comment, which he said "conveniently coincided with the congressional recess period," be extended.

"I urge that you give my views your full consideration and don't make it necessary for Congress once again to demonstrate to an executive agency what we really meant when we passed legislation to uncomplicate the lives of the law-abiding American public," the senator said.