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June 23, 2008

To: All Members, U.S. Congress

Subject: *Kelo* Anniversary – Halt Eminent Domain Abuse

Dear Member of Congress:

Today marks the third anniversary of the Supreme Court's infamous 2005 ruling in *Kelo v. City of New London*, and on behalf of the Property Rights Alliance (PRA), I am writing to express this organization's strong encouragement to pass federal legislation to end abusive eminent domain takings.

The United States Supreme Court decision in *Kelo v. City of New London* (2005) ruled that the government may use the power of eminent domain to expropriate property for private to private transfer under the ambiguous title of "economic development". As a result of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Kelo*, the government's power of eminent domain has become almost limitless, providing victimized citizens with few means to protect their property. **PRA applauds the "Private Property Rights Protection and Government Accountability Act" introduced by Representatives Barton and Sullivan.** This act will allow private property owners the legal recourse they deserve to fight private property takings by state and local governments that are used for private purposes.

Several states have independently passed legislation to limit their power to eminent domain, and the Supreme Courts of Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio have barred the practice under their state constitutions. In response to the nationally unpopular *Kelo* decision, 42 states either prohibited or curbed their ability to take land by eminent domain for reasons of economic development.

Although many states have already acted, Congressional leadership is needed to provide American citizens in every state with the means to protect their private property from exceedingly unsubstantiated claims of eminent domain. On behalf of the property rights community, we thank you for your leadership on this issue and look forward to your continued efforts to protect private property.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Zahourek
Executive Director