

**WASHINGTON** – Congressman Spencer Bachus (AL-6) blasted a federal court ruling that struck down a law protecting children from Internet pornography.

Bachus said he will ask the Department of Justice to appeal the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court.

A U.S. district court judge in Philadelphia ruled yesterday that the Child Online Protection Act (COPA), which Congress passed in 1998 to shield minors from indecent material on the Internet, is an unconstitutional infringement on free speech. The ruling was in response to a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union and other groups.

Congressman Bachus, who sponsored and voted for COPA, called it “a victory for pornographers that I hope will only be temporary.”

“This decision is a slap in the face of parents who are trying to protect their children from the corrupting influence of indecent material on the Internet,” said Bachus.

The law requires commercial pornographers to require some sort of adult identification, such as a credit card, before an individual is exposed to the graphic images on their web sites. It would prevent children from inadvertently coming across so-called pornographic “teaser pages” on the web. A lawsuit filed by the ACLU has prevented the law from being enforced for the past nine years.

The case has been in front of the U.S.

Supreme Court twice, most recently in 2004 when the justices voted to send the law back to district court for further review.

Congressman Bachus, who has experience on the House Judiciary Committee, said he will urge the U.S. Justice Department to appeal this latest ruling to the high court for a final determination.

“Pornographers have no right to put this smut in front of the eyes of innocent children,” Bachus concluded.

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