



## **Bipartisan House Bill would Repeal Patriot Act and Ban Mass Surveillance of Americans**

Noel Brinkerhoff

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An ambitious bipartisan bill that would seriously roll back the federal government's ability to conduct surveillance operations has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives.

HR 1466 (pdf) (the Surveillance State Repeal Act) would do away with the Patriot Act (pdf) and ban large-scale spying programs, such as the National Security Agency's telephone metadata collection that has generated so much controversy. It is the most far-reaching anti-surveillance legislation drafted to date.

"This isn't just tinkering around the edges, it's a meaningful overhaul that makes sure the meaningless surveillance of emails and cell phones are done away with," Representative Mark Pocan (D-Wisconsin), one of the bill's authors, told a briefing for congressional staffers, according to ThinkProgress. The coauthor of HR 1466 is Representative Thomas Massie (R-Kentucky).

The bill's original co-sponsors are Democrats Alan Grayson of Florida, James McGovern of Massachusetts and Lloyd Doggett of Texas. Other supporters include libertarian organizations opposed to widespread government spying.

Patrick Eddington, national security and civil liberties policy analyst for the libertarian think tank CATO Institute, said: "All mass surveillance does is violate the rights and put a chilling effect on the American people."

The legislation also would eliminate numerous surveillance permissions granted under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (pdf) amendments approved by Congress during the George W. Bush administration.

*The Hill* reported that the proposal is "likely to be a nonstarter for leaders in Congress, who have been worried that even much milder reforms to the nation's spying laws would tragically handicap the nation's ability to fight terrorists. A similar bill was introduced in 2013 but failed to gain any movement in the House."

Congress has until June 1 to reauthorize portions of the Patriot Act that support the government's surveillance operation. Without reauthorization of the law's Section 215, the telephone metadata program will expire.