

May 6, 2015

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
United States Senate

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Senate Minority Leader  
United States Senate

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
House Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Reid, Speaker Boehner, and Minority Leader Pelosi:

**We, the undersigned organizations, write in opposition to S.1035, which would seek a straight reauthorization of Section 215 of the Patriot Act.**

Our coalition represents privacy, human rights, civil rights, and government transparency advocates spanning the political spectrum. However, we stand united in our opposition to S.1035, which seeks to reauthorize Section 215 without modification.

Almost two years ago, the United States' bulk surveillance programs operating under Section 215 of the Patriot Act and other authorities were revealed to the public. These bulk surveillance programs raise serious constitutional concerns, erode global confidence in the security of digital products, and are unnecessary for national security. These sentiments were echoed by the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, which concluded that daily collection of Americans' phone records under Section 215 both lacked a legal basis and failed to prevent even a single terror attack.

Policymakers on both sides of the aisle, along with members of the public, have consistently urged Congress to take action to restore accountability, transparency, and faith in intelligence agencies. Despite this, Congress has yet to enact meaningful reforms that would end bulk collection, preserve privacy, and protect human rights.

In the absence of meaningful reform, it is unacceptable to rubber stamp reauthorization of an authority that the government has used to spy on millions of innocent Americans.

Section 215 of the Patriot Act was never intended to be permanent. The sunset provisions were designed to allow Congress to assess and respond to the privacy and civil rights impacts of the law. Proposals such as S.1035 ignore this original intention and fail to address the deleterious impact that mass surveillance conducted under Section 215 continues to have on our privacy, economy, and democracy.

Accordingly, we urge you to oppose S. 1035.

Sincerely,

Access  
Advocacy for Principled Action in Government  
American Association of Law Libraries  
American Booksellers for Free Expression  
American Civil Liberties Union  
American Library Association  
American Society of News Editors  
Amnesty International USA  
Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)  
Association of Alternative Newsmedia  
Association of Research Libraries  
Bill of Rights Defense Committee  
Brennan Center for Justice  
Center for Democracy and Technology  
Center for National Security Studies  
Constitutional Alliance  
Council on American-Islamic Relations  
Cyber Privacy Project  
Defending Dissent Foundation  
Demand Progress  
DownsizeDC.org  
Electronic Frontier Foundation  
Fight for the Future  
FirstAmendment.com  
Free Press Action Fund  
FreedomWorks  
Government Accountability Project  
Gun Owners of America  
Hackers/Founders  
Human Rights Watch  
Liberty Coalition  
Massachusetts Pirate Party  
Media Alliance  
NAACP  
National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers  
National Coalition Against Censorship  
National Security Counselors  
New America's Open Technology Institute  
OpenTheGovernment.org  
PEN American Center  
People For the American Way  
Privacy International  
Project On Government Oversight (POGO)  
R Street  
Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press  
Restore the Fourth  
Student Net Alliance  
Sunlight Foundation  
TechFreedom  
The Constitution Project  
Venture Politics  
World Privacy Forum