



June 8, 2017

## **Key Vote NO on Sponsor, Cosponsors of S. 1297**

On behalf of FreedomWorks' activist community, I urge you to contact your senators and urge them to oppose S. 1297, introduced by Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.). This bill would make Title VII of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) permanent, including the controversial surveillance programs under Section 702.

Current authorization expires in December, which means that Congress must reauthorize it by the end of the year. S. 1287 bill would eliminate the need for reauthorization, granting indefinite authority for a program that collects information on, potentially, millions of Americans.

Section 702 allows the Attorney General and the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) to collect electronic communications by non-citizens of interest to the federal government. Officially, the program is not supposed to target U.S. citizens, but intelligence agencies cast a wide net and often the communications of Americans can be swept up by the surveillance as well.

In addition, there have been accusations of loopholes and backdoors that have allowed for greater collection of data. For example, former DNI James Clapper admitted that through the program, it did collect Americans' emails through the program.

Despite promising to not use Section 702 to surveil Americans, this has been done, and to make things more disturbing, this information can be collected without a warrant. Section 702 may be a powerful tool in the war on terrorism, but it raises important privacy concerns for American citizens. A declassified report from 2011 stated that 250 million communications were collected annually.

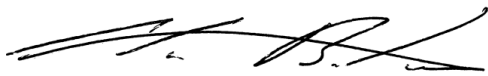
While there is no official number on how many Americans are swept up in this surveillance, the widespread consensus is that "countless" Americans have had their private communications collected by U.S. intelligence agencies.

Given the sweeping powers in Section 702 and the potential for misuse, this program should

require congressional oversight, which can be used to assess both terrorism and privacy concerns. Granting this surveillance authority indefinitely, as S. 1297 does, limits even further Congress's ability to oversee this program.

FreedomWorks will key vote against the sponsor and cosponsors of S.1297 when calculating our Scorecard for 2017. The scorecard is used to determine eligibility for the FreedomFighter Award, which recognizes Members of the House and Senate who consistently vote to support economic freedom and individual liberty.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Brandon', with a stylized, flowing script.

Adam Brandon  
President, FreedomWorks