

June 13, 2019

Dear Representatives:

The undersigned 42 groups write to urge your support for the Amash-Lofgren amendment (Division C, amendment #24) to H.R. 2740, the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, Defense, State, Foreign Operations, and Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act of 2020.

We represent a cross-partisan coalition of civil liberties, transparency, and government oversight organizations committed to reining in the warrantless surveillance of people in the United States. The Amash-Lofgren amendment would accomplish this by limiting the warrantless surveillance conducted pursuant to Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. Specifically, the Amash-Lofgren amendment prohibits:

1. The intentional targeting of people outside the United States when a significant purpose of that targeting is to acquire communications of a particular person in the United States (often referred to as “reverse targeting”);
2. The acquisition of communications to which no participant is a target (often referred to as “about collection”). The government halted this collection in 2017, but asserts it has the authority to restart this collection; and
3. The acquisition of communications known to be entirely domestic. The government unlawfully collects tens of thousands of wholly domestic communications under Section 702.

As described by the provision’s title, Congress passed Section 702 to target people “outside the United States other than United States persons.” Despite this, the government collects communications of United States persons at a large, but undisclosed scale. This amendment would help ensure Section 702 is only used for the purposes Congress intended and would significantly advance the privacy rights of people within the United States. Accordingly, we urge your support of the Amash-Lofgren amendment.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Jason Pye at jppe@freedomworks.org or (202) 942-7634, Neema Singh Guliani at (202) 675-2322 or nguliani@aclu.org, or Sean Vitka at (570) 798-7678 or sean@demandprogress.org.

Sincerely yours,

Advocacy for Principled Action in Government
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
Arab American Institute
Campaign for Liberty
Center for Democracy & Technology
Center for Human Rights and Privacy
Color Of Change
Consumer Action
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)
Courage Campaign
Defending Rights & Dissent
Demand Progress
Due Process Institute
Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF)
Essential Information
Fight for the Future
Free Press Action
FreedomWorks
Government Accountability Project
Government Information Watch
Indivisible
Liberty Coalition
Million Hoodies Movement for Justice
MPower Change
National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
National Coalition Against Censorship
National Security Archive
National Security Counselors
New America's Open Technology Institute
Open the Government
People For the American Way
Presente Action
Project on Government Oversight
Restore the Fourth
RootsAction.org

Secure Justice
Sunlight Foundation
TechFreedom
The Calyx Institute
Win Without War
Woodhull Freedom Foundation