

"No president should have unchecked surveillance powers."

Washington, DC - Rep. Peter Welch supported legislation tonight that restores critical civil liberties protections to federal domestic surveillance.

The Responsible Electronic Surveillance That is Overseen, Reviewed, and Effective (RESTORE) Act, [H.R. 3773](#), passed the U.S. House despite opposition by the Bush administration and House Republicans.

The RESTORE Act ensures intelligence officials have the ability to conduct responsible surveillance under the law, while strengthening the role of the FISA Court to ensure proper judicial oversight of intelligence gathering activities.

It also restores Constitutional protections left out of legislation passed in early August by prohibiting warrantless surveillance of Americans and requiring a court order before permitting surveillance that is deemed to likely include communications between foreign targets and Americans.

"This legislation strikes the much-needed balance between protecting national security and maintaining our civil liberties. We don't need to shred our Constitution to protect our security." said Welch. "This bill puts the courts back in the business of protecting cherished civil liberties."

In addition, the House refused to grant retroactive immunity to the telecommunications companies that had been cooperating with the Bush administration on domestic surveillance. Welch vigorously opposes retroactive immunity for these companies.

In August, Welch voted against both a temporary FISA extension offered by the House leadership (H.R. 3356) as well as a compromise version supported by the White House (S.1927), which passed the U.S. House.

Welch supports House-passed bill prohibiting warrantless surveillance

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Welch added, "What Congress passed in August was a travesty and gave far too much power to the president. No president should have unchecked surveillance powers."