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## **Amash, Polis urge House leaders to stop warrantless surveillance in year-end spending legislation**

*Bipartisan letter signed by 36 representatives asks for five House-passed measures to end civil-liberties abuses*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Representatives Justin Amash (R-Mich.) and Jared Polis (D-Colo.) [sent a letter](#) to House leaders yesterday calling for provisions restricting warrantless government surveillance in any upcoming government-funding legislation. Thirty-four of their House colleagues also signed the letter.

[The letter](#) – which is addressed to Speaker Paul Ryan, Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Appropriations Committee Chairman Harold Rogers, and Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Nita M. Lowey – specifically requests the inclusion of five privacy-focused amendments that passed the House earlier this year with bipartisan support. The amendments would stop taxpayer dollars from being used to fund activities including warrantless bulk data collection and backdoor searches by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the National Security Agency (NSA).

“Though there are many divergent views among Republicans and Democrats on a variety of spending matters, the need to safeguard the Constitution’s Fourth Amendment and protect Americans’ rights is an issue on which there is far-reaching consensus,” the representatives wrote. “Republican and Democratic members of Congress – and, more importantly, the constituents we all represent – overwhelmingly agree that tax dollars should not be used to fund the warrantless surveillance of American citizens.”

The five privacy measures for which the letter advocates all passed the House of Representatives with far-reaching bipartisan support over the summer during consideration of H.R. 2578, the Commerce, Justice Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2016, and H.R. 2685, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2016. Three of the measures passed on voice vote, indicating that approval in the chamber was unanimous or near unanimous. The measures are as follows:

- An amendment to H.R. 2578 to prohibit the DOJ or Federal Bureau of Investigation from using federal funds to require technology companies to weaken the security of their products for the purpose of government surveillance.
- An amendment to H.R. 2578 to prohibit the DOJ from using federal funds to engage in warrantless bulk data collection (a practice the department says it has suspended).
- An amendment to H.R. 2578 to prohibit the National Institute of Standards and Technology from using federal funds to consult with the NSA or Central Intelligence Agency for the purpose of setting deliberately weak cryptographic standards that can be used to enable data collection.

- An amendment to H.R. 2578 to prohibit federal funds from being used within the United States to warrantlessly operate or disseminate a cell site simulator or IMSI catcher, which can be used to collect information about individuals' locations and telephone communications.
- An amendment to H.R. 2685 to limit the use of federal funds for warrantless searches for information pertaining to U.S. citizens collected pursuant to Sec. 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

In addition to Amash and Polis, the letter was signed by Reps. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI), Lloyd Doggett (D-TX), Jeff Duncan (R-SC), John J. Duncan, Jr. (R-TN), Anna G. Eshoo (D-CA), Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI), Louie Gohmert (R-TX), Paul A. Gosar (R-AZ), Morgan H. Griffith (R-VA), Andy Harris (R-MD), Mike Honda (D-CA), Tim Huelskamp (R-KS), Darrell E. Issa (R-CA), Walter B. Jones, Jr. (R-NC), Barbara Lee (D-CA), Ted Lieu (D-CA), Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), Alan Lowenthal (D-CA), Cynthia Lummis (R-WY), Thomas Massie (R-KY), Tom McClintock (R-CA), Mark Meadows (R-NC), Mick Mulvaney (R-SC), Beto O'Rourke (D-TX), Mark Pocan (D-WI), Ted Poe (R-TX), Bill Posey (R-FL), Matt Salmon (R-AZ), Mark Sanford (R-SC), David Schweikert (R-AZ), Marlin A. Stutzman (R-IN), Mark Takano (D-CA), and Peter Welch (D-VT).

The full text of the letter is available [here](#).

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