

CONSERVATIVES SPEAK TO THE PATRIOT ACT

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Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI), Chair of the House Judiciary Committee (Statement of Chairman Sensenbrenner at House Judiciary Committee Oversight Hearing on the Department of Justice, 6/05/2003)

“As I stressed during legislative consideration of the PATRIOT Act, my support for this legislation is neither perpetual or unconditional. I believe the Department of Justice and Congress must be vigilant toward short-term gains which ultimately may cause long-term harm to the spirit of liberty and equality which animate the American character. We must maintain a fundamental commitment to ensure the protection of Americans while defending the beliefs that make us American. To my mind, the purpose of the PATRIOT Act is to secure our liberties, not undermine them.”

Wayne Anthony Ross, former National Rifle Association vice president (“I Spy,” *Anchorage Daily News*, 5/23/2003)

“This (act) needs a substantial amount of review.”

Rep. Don Young (R-AK) (“Young wants changes in Patriot Act,” *Associated Press*, 5/13/2003)

“I think the Patriot Act was not really thought out. I’m very concerned that, in our desire for security and our enthusiasm for pursuing supposedly terrorists, that sometimes we might be on the verge of giving up the freedoms which we’re trying to protect.”

Bob Barr, former Republican member of Congress (“Both right and left condemn Patriot Act,” *The Hill*, 5/6/2003)

“There are a lot of people who say, ‘I don’t have anything to hide.’ But every one of us is subject to being criminalized.”

David Keene, Chairman of the American Conservative Union ("National Security vs. Civil Liberties: Finding a Balance" Press Release, American Conservative Union, 4/10/2003)

The USA PATRIOT Act was passed in haste included ideas previously shelved by the Congress, like expanded civil forfeiture and roving wiretaps: ideas that law enforcement wanted, but could never get. When creating sound anti-terrorism legislation, the line should not be drawn at 'what is helpful for law enforcement,' but at what is needed to protect us while preserving the proper balance between preserving civil liberties and our nation's national security needs."

Rep. Don Young (R-AK), (Talk of Alaska Radio Interview, 2/11/2003)

"Everybody voted for it [the PATRIOT Act] but it was stupid, it was what you call 'emotional voting'... because we didn't follow it through, we didn't study it. I say it's the worst piece of legislation we've ever passed."

Rep. Dick Armey (R-TX), House Majority Leader and Chair of the House Select Committee on Homeland Security, ("Armey: Justice 'Out of Control'" USA TODAY, 10/16/2002)

"I told the President I thought his Justice Department was out of control... Are we going to save ourselves from international terrorism in order to deny the fundamental liberties we protect to ourselves?... It doesn't make sense to me."

David Keene, Chairman of the American Conservative Union ("Ashcroft: Good Intentions on a Bad Road" The Hill, 7/31/2002)

"The Bush administration argues convincingly that roving wiretaps, reading people's e-mail, putting video cameras on every corner and perusing their library habits will make it easier to catch terrorists before they act... the problem is that once all this is in place, we will no longer be living in the same country we lived in prior to Sept. 11."

Paul Weyrich, President of the Free Congress Foundation ("Ashcroft's Terrorism Policies Dismay Some Conservatives" The New York Times, 7/24/2002)

... there is suddenly a great concern that what was passed in the wake of 9-11 were things that had little to do with catching terrorists but a lot to do with increasing the strength of government to infiltrate and spy on conservative organizations

Ken Connor, President of the Family Research Council (“Ashcroft's Terrorism Policies Dismay Some Conservatives” *The New York Times*, 7/24/2002)

“It’s important that we conservatives maintain a high degree of vigilance. We need to ask ourselves the questions, ‘How would our groups fare under these new rules?’”

Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI), Chair of the House Judiciary Committee (“J. Edgar Hoover Is Back” *Washington Times*, 6/10/2002)

“The Justice Department has gone too far. [We can have security]... without throwing respect for civil liberties into the trash heap. We don't have to go back to the bad old days when the FBI was spying on people like Martin Luther King.”

Robert A. Levy, Senior Fellow in Constitutional Studies at the Cato Institute, (“The USA Patriot Act: We Deserve Better” *Cato Institute*, 11/27/01)

“If you think the Bill of Rights is just so much scrap paper, and the separation of powers doctrine has outlived its usefulness, then the USA PATRIOT Act, passed overwhelmingly on Oct. 25, is the right recipe to deal with terrorists. On the other hand, if you are concerned about Fifth Amendment protection of due process, and Fourth Amendment safeguards against unreasonable searches and seizures, then you should be deeply troubled by the looming sacrifice of civil liberties at the altar of national security.”

Phyllis Schlafly, President of the Eagle Forum (Letter to Congress, 10/2/2001)

“We can have security and civil liberties in a time of crisis. The Fourth Amendment is one of our most precious constitutional rights, and we will not hand it over to the terrorists. Proposals that give the federal government unprecedented police power to snoop and spy on law-abiding citizens must be rejected. We do not want an American society where everyone is treated as a terrorist, money launderer, drug trafficker, or criminal. Only totalitarian regimes monitor the private actions of law-abiding citizens.”