

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: “We need to strengthen our counterterrorism efforts and protect the privacy and freedoms of law-abiding Americans - we can and must do both.”

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U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin: “We need to strengthen our counterterrorism efforts and protect the privacy and freedoms of law-abiding Americans - we can and must do both.”

Opposes warrantless government spying of Americans, Supports USA RIGHTS Act

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin today released the following statement on S. 139, the FISA section 702 reauthorization:

“I believe we need to strengthen our counterterrorism efforts and protect the privacy and freedoms of law-abiding Americans - we can and must do both but this legislation doesn’t pass that test.

“In 2001, I opposed the PATRIOT Act because I feared that government surveillance

programs would cross the line and infringe on the privacy rights of Americans and that is exactly what happened. In 2008, I opposed the bill creating the 702 program because it lacked the safeguards to protect innocent, law-abiding Americans from warrantless government spying. For years, the intelligence community has refused to be transparent about how this foreign surveillance program has been used to conduct warrantless surveillance of American citizens. The legislation being voted on today in the Senate reauthorizes Section 702 of FISA for six years while failing to adequately reform that law to prevent the kinds of abuses we have seen. I don't believe we should provide another blank check for six more years and I stand with a bipartisan group of my Senate colleagues in opposition to this legislation.

"I support a better approach that deserves a vote in the Senate but didn't get one today. I am a proud cosponsor of the bipartisan USA RIGHTS Act, which would reauthorize and reform important intelligence programs, providing intelligence agencies the tools they need to fight foreign terrorism, while protecting the constitutional rights guaranteed to every American."