

Republicans Play Politics with National Security

GOP Leaders Distort, Delay National Security Legislation that Protects Americans in Political Gotcha Game

The RESTORE Act is critical national security legislation that will provide the Intelligence Community with the tools it needs to conduct electronic surveillance while restoring fundamental Constitutional checks and balances that were not contained in President Bush's surveillance bill enacted in August.

Republican obstructionists irresponsibly spent the past week distorting this critical national security legislation, promoting the myth that the RESTORE ACT requires a warrant to listen to foreign terrorists abroad. They worked to undermine this bill because they do not believe there should be oversight of this Administration.

In fact, the RESTORE Act:

- Does NOT require individual warrants for foreign targets.
- Provides for a review by the FISA Court of the procedures and guidelines used by NSA to ensure that Americans are not targeted.
- Provides a 45-day emergency period, during which surveillance may be conducted even before the procedures are OK'd by the FISA Court. This provision guarantees that our intelligence community will NEVER miss an opportunity to listen in to foreign terrorists, such as Osama bin Laden.
- Provides unprecedented new authorities for speed and agility when conducting surveillance of foreign terrorists.

Republican leaders took their disregard for our nation's security and Americans' fundamental rights to a new level as the RESTORE Act was being brought to a vote.

Knowing that this important national security bill was poised for passage, Republican obstructionists put forward a motion that reiterated powers already provided for in the bill that would "ensure that our Intelligence Community can conduct surveillance on Osama Bin Laden, al Qaeda, or any other foreign terrorist organization targeting America for attack" (Boehner release, 10/17). All Members and all Americans believe in this goal – so the authors cynically wrote this redundant motion in such a way that if passed it would KILL this important national security bill.

The Democratic Majority refused to engage in Republican Leaders' political gotcha games that place a higher priority on 30-second ads than our nation's security and Americans' rights. The Democratic Congress will complete this critical legislation.