

Conyers

**Statement of the Honorable ~~John Conyers, Jr.~~  
Rules Committee Hearing  
Conyers Amendment to H.R. 5949,  
“FISA Amendments Act Reauthorization Act of 2012”**

**Monday, September 10, 2012, at 5:00 PM  
H-312, Capitol Building**

The bill before us today extends the expiration date of the FISA Amendments Act of 2008 from December 31, 2012 to December 31, 2017. I oppose this long term extension because neither the Congress nor the public yet have an adequate understanding of the impact this law has had on the privacy of American citizens.

The purpose of the Conyers Amendment is to amend this sunset provision—from December 31, 2017, to June 1, 2015. In effect, this amendment shortens the length of reauthorization from five-and-a-half years to three.

The Judiciary Committee has jurisdiction over the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act because it is our responsibility to make certain that the Executive Branch uses these authorities carefully and lawfully.

There is simply no reason to abdicate this responsibility for five years.

An entire presidential administration will pass between now and December 31, 2017. It is unacceptable for Congress to turn a blind eye to the government's use of these programs between now and then.

This change also has the effect of giving a single sunset date to the entire warrantless wiretapping regime—it brings sunset of the FISA Amendments Act in line with three of the most controversial provisions of the PATRIOT Act:

The so-called “Section 215” business records provision, the roving wiretaps provision, and the never-used “lone wolf” provision all expire on June 1, 2015.

Like the measure before this committee today, these provisions also amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act to give the government extraordinary power to act without a warrant. My amendment gives us the opportunity to consider the entire package of controversial provisions at once, instead of piecemeal over the course of the next five years.

If you will accept no other changes to this bill, I urge you to accept this amendment—which leaves the underlying authorities in place, and simply requires us to revisit these programs sooner.