



Congress doesn't really understand what it's doing.

Specifically, the House members who voted 301-118 on Wednesday to reauthorize the vast spying powers in the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act Amendments Act (or FISA Amendments Act, and yes, that's really its name) don't seem to understand what they were doing.

The same thing happened in 2008, when Congress first voted to retroactively legalize warrantless wiretapping. Then, as now, supporters of the legislation falsely insisted that it does not collect the communications of American citizens.

"This bill has nothing to do with Americans on American soil," said Rep. Trey Gowdy (R-S.C.) on the floor. The bill only grants authority for "targeting foreigners located outside of the United States, and not on Americans in the United States, or anywhere else in the world," said House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Chair Rep. Mike Rogers (R-Mich.), who repeated this twice for emphasis. House Judiciary Committee Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas) even emphasized that "the government cannot reverse target individuals overseas in order to monitor those in the United States.

That means the government cannot target a US person simply by monitoring a non-US person that the US person is talking to."

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