

March 22, 2005

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to express our concerns about your recent statements asking Congress to make all of the temporary Patriot Act powers permanent (and, indeed, to expand the Act's powers), without any recognition of the serious reservations many Americans have about secret searches of their homes and their possessions by federal agents, as well as other far-reaching provisions.

We agree that much of the Patriot Act is necessary to provide law enforcement with the resources they need to defeat terrorism, but we remain very concerned that some of its provisions go beyond that mission and infringe on the rights of law-abiding Americans, in ways that raise serious constitutional and practical concerns. The emergence of international terrorism on our shores cannot be allowed to dissolve the carefully constructed structural foundations for preserving our liberty that are required by the Constitution, that very document our soldiers have sacrificed and continue to sacrifice their lives to protect.

When Congress passed the Patriot Act, just 45 days following the horrific attacks on September 11, 2001, a majority in Congress voted to make certain that the most extraordinary provisions of the Act would be subject to congressional review and would expire in December 2005. Now is the time for Congress to review and consider amending these provisions to protect Americans' most fundamental freedoms, and bring the law in-line with the checks and balances demanded by the Constitution.

We urge you to reconsider your unqualified endorsement of the most intrusive, unchecked powers temporarily granted by the Act such as:

- Section 213, which allows government agents to secretly search through people's homes and businesses and seize their personal property without notice for days, weeks, months or perhaps ever.
- Section 215, which allows government agents to collect personal data on law-abiding Americans – such as the books they buy or borrow, their personal medical history, or even records of goods they purchase, such as firearms – without strong evidence connecting the person or their records to the commission of a crime or to a foreign terrorist agent.
- Section 802, which defines terrorism to reach any state or federal crime involving dangerous acts intending to influence the government or citizens.

We believe it is wise to review such powers thoroughly and regularly to ensure the resources of the fight against acts of terrorism are not being squandered, diluted or abused by sweeping in innocent Americans and sweeping away our inalienable rights.

Sincerely,



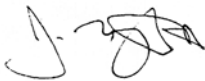
Bob Barr
Chair
Patriots to Restore Checks and
Balances



David Keene
Chairman
American Conservation Union



William Westmiller
National Chairman
Republican Liberty Caucus



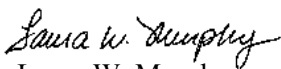
J. Peyton Knight
Executive Director
American Policy Center



Larry Pratt
Executive Director
Gun Owners of America



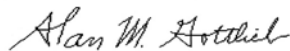
Robert Bulmash
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Private Citizen, Inc



Laura W. Murphy
Director, Washington Legislative Office
American Civil Liberties Union



Grover Norquist
President
Americans for Tax Reform



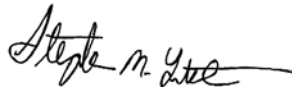
Alan Gottlieb
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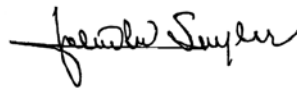
Thomas DeWeese
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Free Congress Foundation



John Snyder
Public Affairs Director
Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms



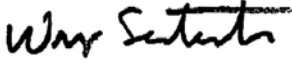
Paul M. Weyrich
President and CEO
Free Congress Foundation



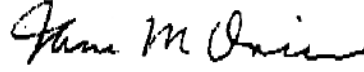
Chuck Muth
President
Citizen Outreach



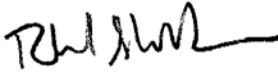
Michael Ostrolenk
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