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Hoekstra Statement on Terrorist Surveillance Compromise

WASHINGTON, D.C. – *U.S. Rep. Pete Hoekstra, R-Mich., the top Republican on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, issued the following statement after the announcement of compromise legislation to strengthen America’s terrorist surveillance capabilities:*

“This compromise is another chance for Congress to give America’s intelligence professionals the tools and authorities they need to help protect our homeland. After the atrocities of 9/11, our nation’s goal has to be preventing the next attack, not prosecuting after the fact. Radical jihadists have not given up on their intentions to attack America, and we cannot sit idly by while the tools that have kept this nation safe continue to erode.

“As we have insisted from the beginning, this proposal gives our intelligence agencies the ability to collect intelligence on foreign targets in foreign lands and ensures that the civil liberties of Americans continue to be protected. It also closes a gap in our nation’s surveillance laws that terrorists and foreign adversaries could have used to hide their plots.

“As for the issue of liability protection, our ability to help secure the homeland, and provide vital intelligence to our combat forces, embassies and allies, requires the backing of patriotic, private companies. Those businesses that cooperate are putting their shareholders and employees at stake, and they deserve our support—not multi-billion dollar lawsuits. This bill recognizes that and provides an avenue for the liability question to be answered.

“Congress, and in particular those on both sides of the aisle who worked on this compromise, appreciate the complex laws, the still highly classified underlying programs and the need to protect the rights of the American people. We also know the threats facing our nation and share a common responsibility to ensure the safety of our homeland. That is what guided us as we worked on this bill.

“Like all compromises, this one involved give and take and no side will view the final product as perfect. There are elements of this bill that I do not support. But it represents a bipartisan compromise, and one that both sides should be able to accept.”