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Contact: Jamal Ware
(202) 225-4121

Hoekstra Addresses Historic Secret House Session

Takes the Intelligence Out of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act

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 conclusion of a historic secret meeting of the U.S House of Representatives to discuss the critical need to strengthen America’s terrorist surveillance capabilities:*

“When you review the secret data that is available, it becomes clear why it is imperative that our terrorist surveillance program be extended. At no time in the history of the United States Congress have we had a chance address the secret data on terrorist threats against our homeland, troops and allies on the House floor. This type of information is typically only made available within the confines of the Intelligence Committee. Reviewed in context, when we talk about threats, it becomes clear that this is not fear mongering as some have claimed, it is in fact, reality.

“Having a secret session gave us a chance to discuss in greater detail, the classified minimization procedures that the intelligence community uses to help safeguard American civil liberties. These procedures, and other safeguards that we were able to discuss, make it clear that the protection of our nation is the priority of America’s intelligence professionals.

“It is the intention of Republicans in this Congress to ensure that America’s intelligence professionals have the tools and authorities they need to target foreign terrorists in foreign lands and help safeguard the nation. Republicans have always supported a warrant when an American is the target of surveillance, but we will never accept extending American Constitutional rights to those who seek to harm us for having Constitutional rights.

“As for the issue of immunity, our ability to help secure our homeland and provide vital intelligence to our troops in combat and allies cannot be done without the support 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. Tonight’s secret session helped provide a better understanding of the support we get from non-government providers, the importance of that support going forward, and what we risk if that support is cut because businesses simply cannot afford the risk.

“This historic secret session should make the case for all Members that cooperation and bipartisanship is the best way to strengthen America’s terrorist surveillance capabilities and protect civil liberties. The best way to get this done is for House Democrat leaders to allow an up or down vote on the bipartisan Senate terrorist surveillance bill.”