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House Intelligence Committee to review NSA surveillance program

Washington, D.C. – *Following Attorney General Alberto Gonzales' January 17th announcement that the Bush Administration would seek warrants for surveillance conducted under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), the House Intelligence Committee requested the Court Orders mandating the decision as well as material submitted to the Court from the Department of Justice.*

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Silvestre Reyes (D-TX) and Ranking Member Pete Hoekstra (R-MI) released the following statement today regarding this request:

“Today, the House Intelligence Committee reached an agreement with the Justice Department about access to certain, key documents pertaining to the National Security Agency (NSA) surveillance program.

“On January 18, 2007, we wrote to the Director of National Intelligence and the Attorney General to request the FISA Court Orders authorizing surveillance under the program, as well as the application and legal briefs submitted to the FISA Court by the Justice Department.

“The fact that these documents were not immediately provided to the Intelligence Committees impaired the Committee’s ability to fully review whether the orders comply with the law.

“The Agreement today facilitates the ability of all Committee Members to review these documents.

“There are still other documents and records to which the Committee requires access in order to execute its oversight responsibilities. We have informed Justice Department officials that the Committee’s requests for those documents remains in effect. We are hopeful that the Administration will comply with those requests in a timely fashion and that further efforts to secure that material will not be necessary.

“The Committee will also continue its oversight of whether the program is effective at tracking terror suspects and whether the program adequately protects the liberties of the American people.

“The American people expect this Committee to perform its Constitutional function of oversight. The Committee will fulfill this expectation.”

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