
Statement of Karen J. Mathis on Congressional Revisions of Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act

CHICAGO August 6, 2007 -- The American Bar Association is deeply concerned that in passing revisions to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, Congress has allowed a great expansion of the warrantless surveillance of American citizens, without adequate checks and balances to prevent invasions of privacy.

The bill included a six-month sunset provision on these sweeping changes to FISA. Congress should not wait for the sunset of this bill, but should immediately craft a law that protects our national security and our constitutional freedoms. Specifically, any permanent legislation should provide for appropriate judicial and congressional oversight.

Going forward, Congress should conduct a comprehensive intelligence review before fundamentally rewriting FISA, to ensure that all members of Congress appreciate why any proposed change is necessary, justified and consistent with the U.S. Constitution.

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