



Ask Your Elected Representatives Where They Stand on NSA Spying

Townhalls, one-on-one meetings, and even press conferences can present opportunities to ask lawmakers questions directly. Use these sample questions about NSA spying to get started. If you'd like to read the sources for these questions, please go to <https://eff.org/r.p0xq>.

1. It's been almost two years since the Guardian published the first Snowden leak, but Congress hasn't done anything to fix the NSA. Section 215 of the Patriot Act is expiring on June 1. What do you plan to do this Congress to reform the Patriot Act? Have you done anything to support NSA reform so far?
2. We keep hearing that national security justifies the NSA's intrusive surveillance, especially the bulk collection of everyone's calling records. But the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, the President's Review Group, and senators who are familiar with how bulk phone records collection works have all said we don't need the program, and that it isn't essential in keeping us safe. Do you think we need Section 215 of the Patriot Act? If so, why?
3. Congress intended Section 702 of the FISA Amendments Act to be used to surveil suspected foreign targets. But because of leaks, we know that Section 702 is used to collect totally domestic American communications. That seems a far cry from foreign intelligence collection. How can we fix Section 702?
4. Director of National Intelligence James Clapper admitted that the NSA collects and searches Americans' private communications without a warrant. Do you think it's right for the NSA to exploit the so-called Section 702 "backdoor" to Americans' phone calls and emails simply because they were captured incidentally?
5. Executive Order 12333 is an order signed by President Ronald Reagan that outlines the roles and conduct of intelligence agencies. We know hardly anything about how the government uses this document, although the NSA has admitted that it uses the order for bulk collection. What role does, and should, Congress play in overseeing the use of Executive Order 12333?



6. In 2014, security vulnerability Heartbleed and others got widespread attention. These security weaknesses were disclosed by researchers, not the government. In fact, the government has admitted that if it sees a “national security or law enforcement need” it may hide vulnerabilities, implying that the government exploits these vulnerabilities for intelligence purposes. We don’t know how the government decides when to let the public know about these dangerous vulnerabilities. What kind of oversight does Congress have over these matters?
7. Both the FBI and NSA Directors have urged companies to install security "backdoors" into hardware or software. They claim that these backdoors would only be accessible to the US government. But tech companies and security experts have retorted that this is impossible and dangerous—security backdoors make products and services, and by extension the Internet, less secure for everyone. There have also been several legislative efforts to prohibit the NSA from mandating security backdoors in products and services. Have you supported these efforts? If not, why not?
8. The New York Times has reported that US companies suffered reputational harm overseas, and even lost business, in the wake of revelations about the extent of NSA spying. This is especially troubling considering the economic troubles the US has faced in recent years. What do you say to companies and their employees who are concerned that NSA spying is making U.S. tech companies less competitive?
9. Considering that we’ve been told that there are many levels of oversight, it’s outrageous that most of Congress didn’t know that the government was vacuuming up ordinary people’s information. In fact, we seem to learn about a new spying program every week, though only through unauthorized leaks. It seems that the NSA wants to keep everything classified, and that prevents even you, a member of Congress, from knowing what’s going on or telling us what you know. Do you agree that too much secrecy is part of the problem here? How would you fix that?

In addition to asking lawmakers questions in person, you can also take action now by calling Congress at Fight215.org.