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Rep. Amash To Reintroduce Amendment Against NSA Spying

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Rep. Justin Amash (R-MI), who had introduced an amendment against NSA spying to the Appropriations Bill prior to the Congressional recess, which lost by only several votes, announced on CNN Sunday that, following the recent exposé in the Washington Post, he believes many who voted no on the amendment would now vote for it, and that he intends to reintroduce a similar amendment when Congress reconvenes.



Rep. Justin Amash (MI-3)

The transcript of the interchange follows:

CNN: CROWLEY: Joining me now, the man who led the fight to defund the NSA surveillance program that collects telephone records of people in the United States, Republican congressman, Justin Amash of Michigan. Thank you, congressman, for getting up this morning. Do you think —

REP. JUSTIN AMASH, HOUSE CMTE. ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVT. REFORM: Thanks, Candy.

CROWLEY: — that your bill, which was defeated by a fairly narrow margin might have passed had folks heard about the mistakes that have been made at the NSA in spying on the e-mails or the phone calls of innocent Americans?

AMASH: Well, I certainly heard from a number of my colleagues directly and through the media that they feel differently about the amendment now that if they had a second chance, yes, they might have voted yes on it.

CROWLEY: Are you going to give them a second chance?

AMASH: Well, I'm hopeful that we'll have another opportunity. It might not be exactly the same amendment. This was an amendment to an appropriations bill so it had to be

written in a very particular way. And I'm hopeful we'll have a way to amend some kind of policy legislation in the future.

CROWLEY: The NSA reported its mistakes. It did an internal audit. That's how they found out about all of this, about the mistakes that were made. Isn't that a sign actually that the system is working? That they, you know, looked and said holy cow, we really messed up on this and we messed up on that?

AMASH: No. The system is not working. Americans were told by the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee that there were zero privacy violations, and we know that's not true. Americans were assured by the president and others that the FISA court had significant oversight, and we've heard from the chief judge of the FISA court who says that's not true. And Americans have been told that their records have not been collected, that they had no data collected by the director of national intelligence, and we found out that wasn't true.

And, it's important to understand that even if all of the procedures had been followed, there would still be a government violation of people's rights, a government violation of people's privacy under the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution because the records of every American in the United States are being collected without any suspicion.

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