



Pressure Builds on House GOP Leadership To Allow Vote On NSA Spying Bill

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The USA Freedom Act, the bill introduced by Rep. James Sensenbrenner to end the bulk collection of telephone data of Americans by the National Security Agency, now has 102 co-sponsors, 51 from each party, and the pressure is building on House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) to allow a vote on it, reports *The Hill*. Boehner has been a supporter of the NSA spying program, and voted against an amendment, last summer, that was sponsored by Rep. Justin Amash (R-Mich.), to end it. The amendment failed by only seven votes, but support for some legislative remedy for the NSA spying program has been gaining since then. Rep. Darell Issa (R-Calif.), the chairman of the House Oversight Committee voted against the Amash amendment, but is a co-sponsor of the Sensenbrenner bill. House Judiciary Committee chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) is not a co-sponsor of the Sensenbrenner bill, but an aid of his told *The Hill* that Goodlatte "has determined that we need to take legislative action."

The foremost defender of the NSA in the House is House Intelligence Committee chairman Mike Rogers (R-Mich.) who had planned to move a bill through his own committee that would only have required the NSA to report more information about violations of privacy rights but the markup was canceled by the leadership. One House Democratic aid told *The Hill* that the GOP leadership is boxed in. If they don't allow a vote on a stand-alone bill, then they'll be faced with demands to allow amendments to defense and intelligence authorization bills, which are must-pass bills. While it's necessary to get the NSA under control, ultimately what must be done is the impeachment and removal from office of President Obama, under whose presidency the NSA spying program has expanded enormously.

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