

# For Immediate Release

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## Access Congratulates U.S. Senate for Passing Legislation to End Bulk Collection

**Washington D.C.** — Access congratulates the United States Senate for approving the USA FREEDOM Act of 2015. The legislation will ban bulk collection under some U.S. surveillance powers, increase transparency, and improve accountability. It now goes to President Obama, who is expected to sign the bill into law.

**“Congress has responded to public demands to curtail overbroad, unlawful surveillance by passing the USA FREEDOM Act,”** said Amie Stepanovich, U.S. Policy Manager at Access. **“We celebrate today’s vote as an important first step toward comprehensive surveillance reform. Now that the Congress has passed a prohibition against bulk collection, it should be expanded to other authorities, including Section 702 of the FISA Amendments Act.”**

**“It is monumental that Congress has finally acted to constrain overreaching surveillance agencies. While we are disappointed that stronger reforms weren’t included in this package, the USA FREEDOM Act sends a message: unlawful, unaccountable, unacceptable surveillance must end now,”** added Stepanovich.

Passing the USA FREEDOM Act is the first step toward comprehensive surveillance reform. Now, we need legislation that definitively ends bulk collection under other surveillance authorities. Bulk collection is [inherently disproportionate](#), and therefore unacceptable under internationally recognized human rights standards. In 2017, the [sunset](#) of Section 702 of the FISA Amendments Act and other authorities will provide another

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deadline to ensure that we address overbroad surveillance. And the onus is not only on Congress. The executive branch must also substantively limit spying under [Executive Order 12333](#).

**“Access will not stop fighting until surveillance authorities are properly limited to ensure that people around the world can experience their most personal moments without the fear that the government is listening. After completing consideration of the USA FREEDOM Act, the House and Senate must swiftly consider legislation to reform other surveillance programs and [authorities](#),”** said Stepanovich.

**“The United States must not indiscriminately undermine the basic human rights of all people. Congress and the President must now continue reworking surveillance authorities to ensure compliance with international obligations,”** finished Stepanovich.

The human rights obligations applicable to surveillance are detailed in the “[International Principles on the Application of Human Rights to Communications Surveillance](#).” Recently, Access released an Implementation Guide ([PDF](#)) that applies the [Principles](#) to each step of the government surveillance process. It provides a framework for law enforcement and intelligence gathering that respects human rights.

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