

## Broad coalition protests US surveillance program

June 11 2013, by Rob Lever

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A man protests the Patriot Act on July 29, 2004 in Boston, Massachusetts. A coalition of Internet and civil liberties groups launched a campaign Tuesday protesting the huge US online surveillance program revealed in the past week.

A coalition of Internet and civil liberties groups launched a campaign Tuesday protesting the huge US online surveillance program revealed in the past week.

Joining the effort were the Mozilla Foundation, [American Civil Liberties Union](#), Greenpeace USA, the World Wide Web Foundation and more than 80 other organizations or companies.

The coalition launched a website, StopWatching.us, and called on Congress to launch a full probe and urging more disclosure from US officials about the National Security Agency's vast program [Internet surveillance program](#).

An online petition was also launched on the website.

"We don't want an Internet where everything we do is secretly logged and tracked by government," said Alex Fowler, head of privacy and public policy for Mozilla, which produces the [Firefox browser](#).

Fowler said the revelations "confirm many of our worst fears," and "raise serious questions about individual privacy protections, checks on government power and court orders impacting some of the most popular Web services."

Randy Reitman of the [Electronic Frontier Foundation](#) said the groups want legal reforms to halt this type of surveillance and a "full investigative congressional committee" on the matter.

The organizations also called for reform of Section 215 of the Patriot Act, a measure passed after the September 11 attacks, which authorize secret court orders used for some surveillance, and of the [Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act \(FISA\)](#) which has also been used.

A letter sent to members of Congress expressed concern about the PRISM program revealed to be operated by the secretive [National Security Agency](#) and FBI.

"This type of blanket data collection by the government strikes at bedrock American values of freedom and privacy," the letter said.

"This dragnet surveillance violates the First and Fourth Amendments of the US constitution, which protect citizens' right to speak and associate anonymously and guard against unreasonable searches and seizures that protect their right to privacy.

"We are calling on Congress to take immediate action to halt this surveillance and provide a full public accounting of the NSA's and the FBI's data collection programs."

Signatories included a diverse group including the American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression, Center for Democracy and Technology, Competitive Enterprise Institute and Internet companies reddit and DuckDuckGo.

"Imagine if the government just ripped out everyone's window curtains—that's the effect of the NSA's spying," said Free Press Action Fund Internet Campaign director Josh Levy.

"Living in a [surveillance](#) state makes it harder for the press to hold power accountable, for activists to organize for justice and for everyone to live their lives in private. We urge Congress to shine a light on the NSA's secret spying programs."

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