

There was no objection.

Mr. BASS. Mr. Speaker, following on my friend of Rhode Island, I had the pleasure of joining him and you, Mr. Speaker, in Atlanta a week and a half ago to witness the 15th international FIRST Competition. It was truly an extraordinary experience. There were 1,133 teams represented there, 904 of them were returning teams, and 229 new teams there.

Let me explain, as my friend from Rhode Island talked about how this works. What happens is a mentor or a company or a small businessman or anybody outside an engineer, outside of a school system, will go to a school, a high school and say they want to start a FIRST team there.

You get together a group of kids, the kinds of kids that you might not see on the football field or the baseball field, the kind of kid who might not be the biggest, most popular person in the school. You get together with them, and you tell them about how you could build a robot, go to a competition, win that competition, go to a regional, go to the nationals and really do something that is exciting.

This foundation was started by, as my friend from Rhode Island said, Dean Kamen, a constituent of mine from New Hampshire. Dean Kamen didn't get a college degree. He spent quite a bit of time in college, but he used the skills that were available to him to learn, what was important to learn in order to become successful, a business person, an inventor, an entrepreneur, and obviously an engineer and a physicist.

His dream is not only to be successful in his own life but to be able to communicate that kind of success to kids who may not have the kind of advantages that many of us enjoy. So he put together this organization which he called FIRST. It is designed to give kids, many of whom come from disadvantaged school systems and disadvantaged neighborhoods, and are from families that may have problems, but to give these kids the excitement that one gets from baseball or from football or from other sports, and, indeed, he succeeded.

My friend from Rhode Island went to the Boston regionals and saw how excited these children were, as I did, when I went to the regional in Manchester, New Hampshire, with their team screaming for them in the audience and the robots competing against one another in a ring with referees dressed in stripes judging them.

They handed out over 2,000 awards to these kids nationally this year. Dean Kamen himself made a beautiful clock out of Plexiglass, a beautiful grandfather clock that is given each year to the winner.

Indeed, Dean is a great entrepreneur, a great businessman, and he has brought a lot of great products to society. But his real passion in the world, I believe, is bringing education and excitement in engineering and physics to children.

Now you may ask, is this just the work of one individual and one person's dream? Well, back in 2002, the FIRST Foundation contracted with Brandeis University to do a study about what happens to their graduates. Here are some of their conclusions, key conclusions.

Participants in the FIRST program were more likely to attend college than an average high school graduate. Eighty-nine percent of the FIRST competition alumni attended college. That compares with a 65 percent national average. Once at college, a high proportion of FIRST alumni took courses at internships that were related to math, science, technology. Eighty-seven percent took a math course in college. Seventy-eight took at least one science course. That compares with a 66 percent average in these fields.

Perhaps the most striking finding is that 41 percent of the alumni that went to FIRST actually ended up majoring in engineering in college. Their educational aspirations were well above the national average; 78 percent of the FIRST alumni reported they expected to earn a graduate degree versus 58 percent among college students nationally.

FIRST alumni were more likely to pursue careers in science, technology and engineering. Compared to students in a comparison group, 45 percent versus 20 percent. FIRST alumni also reported continuing involvement in their communities. FIRST alumni were more than twice as likely to report volunteering in the community in the past years than were students in the matched comparison group, 71 percent versus 30 percent. Site visits indicate also that a variety of positive public impact in schools, including new classes, improve school spirit and other great benefits.

My friends, this is a wonderful program that is in its fifteenth year now, has handed out almost \$8 million in scholarships, has business, educational institutions and students working together for science and education.

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It is a great partnership. I have two challenges: I want my colleagues to get involved in their first regionals, and I want the first participants to contact their Members of Congress and get them involved. This is a great program that is good for America and good for education.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. EMANUEL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

NSA DATABASE OF AMERICANS' PHONE CALLS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the news reports released today that the National Security Agency has been collecting telephone data on tens of millions of Americans. With these news reports, we have discovered that the NSA, in conjunction with some of our country's largest telecommunications providers, now has a database with the phone records of millions of Americans.

While the creation of this database does not involve the NSA listening to or recording our conversations, the agency now has detailed records of calls people have made to business associates, to maybe a family physician, to friends, to family. This program is a significant violation of the privacy of all Americans.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time the administration has had the National Security Agency spy on Americans. We discovered just this past December that the President had authorized the NSA to spy domestically. While we still do not have much information on the domestic spying program, we know that hundreds, possibly thousands, of Americans had their telephone conversations and e-mails monitored.

President Bush asserts that he authorized the NSA only to intercept the international communications of people with known links to al Qaeda and related terrorist organizations. Yet we find out months later that during the same period of time, the NSA has been creating the largest database ever assembled, with information from millions of people. We can hardly say that millions of people here in the United States whose privacy has been invaded have suspected ties to terrorism.

The President did this yet again without seeking warrants. This administration has long sought to extend its power and authority at every available opportunity, and this is no exception. If the administration truly needed these phone records, they could have, at the very least, obtained warrants from the FISA court.

The fourth amendment clearly states: "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrant shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation."

I strongly believe that gathering information on millions of American citizens without first obtaining warrants or any judicial oversight clearly violates this core principle of our Constitution.

I have to ask, where is the oversight? A program of this magnitude must be considered by Congress. While the President has stated that appropriate Members of Congress have been briefed on intelligence activities, this does not constitute oversight. Congress should

hold hearings, question witnesses about the program, and consider its legality. Congress needs to step up and exercise its proper oversight responsibility, something it has failed to do for 5 years. At a minimum, the oversight committees must make a determination on the legality of this program.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that the administration will contend that questioning the existence of this database is undermining our Nation's security efforts. It is essential that the President must have the best possible intelligence to protect our Nation, and he must be able to gather this intelligence. However, this has to be done in accordance with our Constitution, the bedrock of our Nation.

Despite what this administration would have us believe, securing our Nation from all enemies, both foreign and domestic, can be achieved without violations of our constitutional freedoms.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONTINUED VIOLATION OF AMERICANS' PRIVACY BY ILLEGAL SPYING CANNOT BE TOLERATED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, the continued violation of Americans' privacy by illegal spying cannot be tolerated. Today we found that this administration is building a database of millions of Americans' phone calls to know who we called and who called us. This is a privacy right that needs to be protected and respected, and we have now seen multiple violations of this principle where illegal spying has occurred.

The U.S. Congress must hold hearings. It must stop illegal spying. I will be offering an amendment on the defense appropriations bill to assure that no taxpayer money can be used for illegal spying to violate the privacy rights of Americans.

The excuse we may hear from the administration is that, no, these conversations may not be taped. But who Americans called is a privacy right and is protected by the law, and who calls us is a privacy right and it is protected by the law. It is protected by section 222 of the Communications Act, it is

protected by the fourth amendment to the United States Constitution, and it is protected by the common sense of the American people that we ought to protect our privacy and democracy at the same time we are protecting our security. And both can be protected.

The fact of the matter is that the FISA law builds in the ability of the Federal Government to in fact crack down on terrorism, something we all want to do. We want to have an aggressive program of electronic eavesdropping on al Qaeda and other terrorists, but we want to make sure that that is done within the law on the simple proposition that when the Federal Government does electronic eavesdropping, there is another set of eyes overseeing that program: our judges, our judicial system.

What the law demands and Americans demand and the Constitution demands is that there is a review through the warrant process so that a warrant is obtained when this eavesdropping occurs. And if there is not time for that, under the FISA law, warrants can be obtained 72 hours thereafter retroactively.

So what we are saying, and I think the broad swath of the millions of Americans who have to know tonight, is that somewhere in this country there is a database sitting with your records that belong to you that is subject to your privacy that has now been violated by the Federal Government, without any review whatsoever by a judge and without review whatsoever and oversight of the United States Congress. That is wrong, and it has simply got to stop.

The U.S. Congress has an obligation. It is an obligation to stand up to an administration that refuses to abide by the law. This is a precious thing, democracy; and democracy is most precious when it is threatened. When we are currently involved in a war, it is most important to rise to the protection of our privacy.

We have been involved in these fights for our privacy now for some period of time. We have fought to protect the private records of our cell phone records from being sold to telemarketers; we have fought to prevent our tax records being sold to other people who will market to us; and now we need to fight to make sure there is a review and a warrant given before, or at least after, our phone records are put into some master database with the privacy of millions of Americans violated.

The reason we found out about this today is that the journalists have reported on this. Unfortunately, the administration has not been forthcoming to tell the U.S. Congress what they have been doing; and the U.S. Congress, the folks elected by people from 435 districts in 50 States, ought to have access to this information so that there can be oversight. There is not a review of this.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the U.S. Congress needs to stand up and be

counted, stand up and be counted for the privacy rights of America, to stop the violation of privacy that we have in our phone records. Who we called and who called us is a private matter. It ought to be protected, and we are going to ensure that it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DOING BETTER FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, earlier today I took the opportunity to wish all of our mothers a very happy Mother's Day. Might I include my colleagues and their relatives, the staff of this House and this Congress, because this is an opportunity for us to simply say thank you, thank you to the many mothers who work every single day, whether in the home or outside the home. Whether they are your mom because they are related, or because they have just simply given you a greater opportunity in life, they deserve a thank you.

Might I also offer my appreciation to the moms who are on the front lines in Iraq and Afghanistan and serving in the United States military.

This is an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to kind of recount where we are in this Congress and to ensure that we really are working on the kind of legislative agenda that really helps our families.

I guess I would argue somewhat with the statement that we have worked as hard as we should have worked. For example, the tax reconciliation bill gives most of the benefit to the richest of Americans. If you make a certain amount, if you are a hard-working single mom, you might even get the minimal \$9 tax break. I know we can do better.

Then let me say as we look to the United States military, we should remember that they are on the front lines so that we might be free. I am very proud today that, almost unanimously, this Congress passed by 415-9 an amendment that I offered to the defense authorization bill that will say happy Mother's Day to all the Reserve and National Guard families, because the amendment provides a clarifying feature, and that feature is that we will take into consideration the number of deployments one has had before further utilization of that particular soldier is enacted. We will take into consideration how many deployments there have been.

I have heard from Reserve families all around the Nation, and particularly