The powers of intelligence and enforcement are among the most important powers of government, but also the most fearsome. They must be wielded very, very carefully. For decades, our government routinely has collected information on potential foreign threats through various forms of surveillance. These collection activities enjoy broad bipartisan support in our country because of their value in helping to protect American citizens and interests.

However, in the 1960s and 1970s, these collection capabilities were turned on the American people and executive branch agencies engaged in spying on the American public, sometimes even for political purposes. The ensuing public backlash triggered the adoption of legal reforms that gave us laws to help prevent a repeat of these abuses.

Subsequently, the tragedy of September 11, 2001, gave proponents of extended domestic surveillance a powerful political and rhetorical weapon, which they used to reduce constitutional protections against surveillance and seizures without appropriate warrants.

When the Congress passed the Patriot Act in March of 2006, it included sunset requirements of three provisions that you've heard about today. Since 2005, I've voted against extending these and other provisions because these provisions are overly broad and frequently abused while still not improving truly the security of the American people. My concerns are supported by the revelations of abuses of those authorities during hearings of the House Judiciary Committee in 2009 and in multiple reports issued by the Inspector General of the Department of Justice.

The bill before us today does nothing to fix these problems or prevent future abuses. This bill does not raise the standards for intelligence collection to ensure that the right people are targeted in the first place. The law was not meant to sunset so that we could periodically reauthorize it, unchanged. We're now on the verge of the third ``temporary'' extension, with no remedies for the flaws identified by this body and the Department of Justice Inspector General.

For all of these reasons, I urge Members to vote ``no.''