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PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20515
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MICHAEL MEERMANS,
MAJORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

DAVID BUCKLEY
MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

March 28, 2006

The President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We write to reiterate our strong view that the failure to brief *all* Members of the House Intelligence Committee into the operational details of the NSA surveillance program constitutes an ongoing violation of the National Security Act of 1947, as amended. *See* 50 U.S.C. § 413(a)(a).

Last week, the Ranking Member personally asked the Vice President to allow all 20 members of the Committee to be briefed, as opposed to the group of 11 that you have proposed. The Vice President declined the request, presumably on the grounds that briefing the full Committee would constitute a security risk.

Several hundred individuals in the Executive Branch have been briefed, but you continue to insist that nine Members of HPSCI – Democrats and Republicans – cannot be trusted with the information. This is an insult. As Members of the Select Committee, we handle highly classified information nearly every day. Failure to brief the full Committee compromises the oversight we are charged with conducting on behalf of the American people.

The five members of the Minority "selected" to receive this briefing will do so because we believe it is vital that Congress receive this information. However, the remaining four members who are excluded in no way waive their rights under the National Security Act to receive the briefing they are due under law.

Sincerely,

signatures on next page

cc: Chairman Peter Hoekstra

Jane Harman
Ranking Democrat

Anna G. Eshoo

Alcee L. Hastings

Rush Holt

Silvestre Reyes

C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger

Leonard L. Boswell

John F. Tierney

Robert E. (Bud) Cramer, Jr.