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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** [Neal A. Patel](mailto:neal_patel@heller.senate.gov)/[Michawn Rich](mailto:michawn_rich@heller.senate.gov) | | June 17, 2015 | 202-224-6244 |   **Heller, Wyden Bill Requires Warrants for Aerial Surveillance**  *Legislation Protects Privacy; Provides Certainty for Industry and Law-Enforcement*  **(Washington, DC)**– U.S. Senators Dean Heller (R-NV) and Ron Wyden (D-OR) today introduced the Protecting Individuals From Mass Aerial Surveillance Act, which requires the federal government to obtain a warrant when it conducts aerial surveillance in the United States.  As new technology like high-quality digital cameras, cellphone tracking equipment, and low-cost unmanned aerial systems (UASs) have removed barriers to monitoring Americans from the air, this bipartisan legislation would create critical safeguards for Americans’ privacy, while also providing certainty about the legal framework for aerial surveillance.  **“Since my first days in Congress, I’ve fought to protect the privacy rights of Nevadans. As technological advancements continue to impact the daily lives of Americans, the civil liberties of the nation’s citizens must not be infringed upon by the federal government. This legislation protects those inherent rights from being trampled by the government’s intrusion from above and provides much needed clarity on what authority the federal government has related to aerial surveillance. I’d like to thank Senator Wyden for his leadership and hard work on this bipartisan legislation,”** said Senator Heller  Senator Wyden added, **“Americans’ privacy rights shouldn’t stop at the treetops. Technology has made it possible to conduct round-the-clock aerial surveillance. The law needs to keep up.”**  Wyden continued, **“Clear rules for when and how the federal government can watch Americans from the sky will provide critical certainty for the government, and help the unmanned aircraft industry reach its potential as an economic powerhouse in Oregon and the United States.”**  Recent press reports have detailed numerous instances of aerial surveillance by the federal government. Under one program, [the FBI has surveilled people in dozens of American cities](https://www.yahoo.com/tech/s/fbi-behind-mysterious-surveillance-aircraft-over-us-cities-070836765--politics.html) without warrants, using a fleet of small airplanes.  To further protect Americans’ privacy:  ·         The bill would apply to both manned- and unmanned-aircraft.  ·         Unlawfully collected information would be inadmissible in court.  ·         The government would be prohibited from identifying persons who show up incidentally in surveillance, unless there is probable cause to believe such persons have committed a crime.  ·         The bill prohibits the government from soliciting to commercial/private operators to conduct surveillance that the government itself is not authorized to do.  The bill includes exceptions for border patrol (within 25 miles of land border), testing operations, public land surveillance, including surveying for weather-related damage, research, scoping for environmental dangers and illegal vegetation, as well for as wildlife management.  It does not impact commercial operations or apply to state and local law-enforcement agencies.  ###  [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_fb.png](http://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Senator-Dean-Heller/325751330177) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_tw.png](http://twitter.com/SenDeanHeller) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_yt.png](http://www.youtube.com/user/SenDeanHeller) |