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**Heller Statement on NSA Wiretapping Verizon Phones**

**(Washington, D.C.) –** Today, U.S.Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) issued the following statement in response to reports that the National Security Agency was granted authority to collect vast amounts of information from Verizon Business Network customers:

“This is yet another example of government overreach that forces the question, ‘What sort of state are we living in?’ There is clearly a glaring difference between what the government is doing and what the American people think they are doing.

"Of course, keeping American citizens safe is one of government’s most important responsibilities, but there is a fine line between protecting our nation and protecting our Fourth Amendment rights. Our government continues to come close to that line and in some areas may have even crossed it. It is exactly these types of concerning reports that spotlight the need for transparency and access to information that I have fought for in Congress and will continue to work towards,” said Senator Dean Heller.

Senator Heller voted against the PATRIOT Act five times due to the concerns about measures in the bill that provide the legal authority for the government to collect this same type of information. Senator Heller also supported an amendment introduced by Senators Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Mike Lee (R-UT) that would require the Attorney General disclose each Foreign Surveillance Court (FISA) court decision unless it is not in the national security interest of the United States.

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