

(July 22, 2005) Rep. Lipinski Supports Giving Law Enforcement Tools to Fight Terrorism

Rep. Lipinski Supports Giving Law Enforcement Tools to Fight Terrorism

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Dan Lipinski (IL03) voted to reauthorize the Patriot Act, giving American law enforcement and intelligence authorities the tools they need to continue fighting terrorist threats against our country. The legislation extends several expiring provisions of the original law, while adding provisions that will protect civil liberties.

"We live in an age where we must be vigilant against terrorist threats to our livelihood, as the recent tragic bombings in London have reminded us," Lipinski said. "Congress has acted today to send a message to terrorists who would plot against us: we will use every legitimate means available to fight this battle and keep our country strong and safe from further attacks."

The original Patriot Act was enacted after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 in order to remove the wall that prevented our law enforcement and intelligence communities from effectively sharing information for fighting terrorism.

"We all agree that we must give our government the tools necessary to catch terrorists before they can act again," Lipinski said. "Thanks to the Patriot Act, and the hard work of many people, our country has not suffered another attack since September 11."

However, Rep. Lipinski also stressed the importance of protecting the rights and liberties of individuals against potential abuses of power. The House sought to balance the goals of fighting terrorism and preserving civil liberties. "While we must do everything we can to protect Americans from terrorism, it has to be done in a way that protects basic constitutional rights."

Congressman Lipinski voted in favor of adding a number of safeguards to the bill, such as placing more strict requirements on the use of roving wiretaps and "sneak and peek" searches, allowing the recipient of a national security letter to consult with an attorney and challenge the letter in court, and requiring that requests for library or bookstore records be personally approved by the FBI director.

Last month, Congressman Lipinski voted to bar the Justice Department from using appropriated funds to search library and bookstore records under Section 215 of the Patriot Act without a traditional search warrant.