

RANDY NEUGEBAUER

19TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

1424 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4319
PHONE: (202) 225-4005
FAX: (202) 225-9615
www.randy.house.gov

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

611 UNIVERSITY AVENUE
SUITE 220
LUBBOCK, TX 79401
(806) 763-1611

1510 SCURRY STREET
SUITE B
BIG SPRING, TX 79720
(432) 264-0722

500 CHESTNUT STREET
SUITE 819
ABILENE, TX 79602
(325) 675-9779

August 21, 2013

The Honorable Mike Rogers
Chairman
House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

The Honorable C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger
Ranking Member
House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Ruppertsberger,

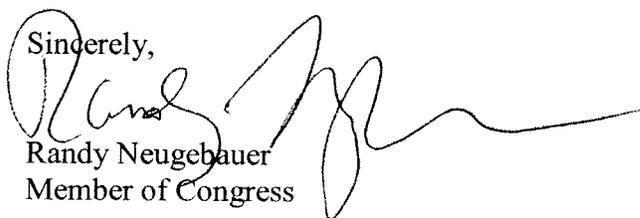
Please consider this letter a formal request for a thorough, classified briefing on the NSA's ongoing data collection and surveillance program.

Following the leak of information by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden, I reviewed the programs he unveiled. After speaking with many of my colleagues in the House, and examining the information available, I came to the conclusion that the NSA's data collection program did not by design infringe on our individual liberties, and has undoubtedly been an effective tool in thwarting potential terrorist attacks here at home. I voted against amendments that would have completely eliminated NSA surveillance activities, believing strongly that Congress should exercise its oversight and monitor the program, not cancel a program that has thwarted dozens of potential attacks against the United States.

However, the recently revealed internal NSA audit gives me serious concerns about the existing oversight of the program. According to the report (obtained and released by the Washington Post on August 15, 2013), the NSA has incurred thousands of privacy infractions, overstepped its legal authority, and conducted unauthorized surveillance on American citizens. Between April 2011 and March 2012 alone, this internal report outlined 2,776 violations of the established rules for the program or the court orders. This number of infractions indicates a serious lack of oversight at best, and an almost complete disregard for the law at worst. While the report claims that many of these violations were a result of computer or operator error, a significant amount were serious violations of the existing law.

Regardless of justification for the infractions outlined in the report, I believe it is my duty as a Member of Congress to request a full briefing on this program. My constituents remain divided on this important issue, and I must be able to provide them with my honest assessment based on accurate and thorough data.

As a representative for the 19th District of Texas, I strive daily to fulfill the oath of office I took when I was sworn in as a Member of Congress. I pledged to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. The Founders constructed a document that protects our individual liberties and freedoms, but also establishes a national defense to guard against our enemies. Every time I vote, I consider whether it's in the best interest of my constituents, and whether it makes our country stronger. In order to fulfill this responsibility to my constituents, I must be confident that I have all information available, and can make an informed decision on continued support for the NSA surveillance program.

Sincerely,

Randy Neugebauer
Member of Congress