Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may

consume.

Next September 11 will mark the 10-year anniversary of the worst

terrorist attack on the U.S. in history. America is fortunate not to

have suffered another attack of such magnitude in the past decade, but

we must not take this relative security for granted or let our safety

become complacency.

America is safe today not because terrorists and spies have given up

Their goal to destroy our freedoms and our way of life. We are safe today

because the men and women of our Armed Forces, our intelligence

community, and our law enforcement agencies work every single day to

protect us. And Congress must ensure that they are equipped with the

resources they need to counteract continuing terrorist threats.

On February 28, three important provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act

will expire. These provisions give investigators in national security

cases the authority to conduct ``roving'' wiretaps, to seek certain

business records, and to gather intelligence on lone terrorists who are

not affiliated with a known terrorist group. These types of provisions

have been used by domestic law enforcement agencies for years to

apprehend typical criminals. It is common sense to give our national

security investigators the same tools to fight terrorists that our

police officers have to combat crime.

The ongoing threat from al Qaeda and other terrorist groups

continues. In the last few years, terrorists have attempted to blow up

a plane over Detroit; to bomb New York's subway system; to destroy

skyscrapers in Dallas, Texas, and Springfield, Illinois; and to

detonate a car bomb in New York City's Times Square. Most of these

plots were thwarted thanks to the Patriot Act and other national

security laws.

The Patriot Act works. It has proved effective in preventing

terrorist attacks and protecting Americans. To let these provisions

expire would leave every American less safe. We must continue these

intelligence-gathering measures to win our fight against terrorists.

And President Obama agrees.

In a letter to Congress last month, Director of National Intelligence

Admiral Clapper and Attorney General Holder urged us to reauthorize the

expiring provisions, noting that they are critical tools that ``have

been used in numerous highly sensitive intelligence collection

operations.'' This bill reauthorizes the expiring provisions through December 8, 2011, the last day that the House of Representatives is scheduled to be

in session. This extension serves two important functions. First, it

ensures that these intelligence-gathering tools will remain available

to national security investigators. And second, it provides Congress

with the opportunity to engage in a thorough review of these provisions

as we pursue and consider a longer reauthorization.

I urge my colleagues to support our ability to continue to protect

Americans against terrorist plots and attacks.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, there has been some criticism today that section 215,

business records authority, gives national security agencies too much

access to confidential records, but section 215 has more strict

requirements than grand jury subpoenas used in criminal investigations.

Unlike a grand jury subpoena, which is not issued by a judge, a 215

order can only be used by a FISA court judge. Section 215 only grants

terrorism investigators the power to get records held by third parties,

such as a hotel or car rental records.

Also there has been criticism that section 215 violates Fourth

Amendment protections against unreasonable searches and seizures.

However, a request for business records held by a third party is not a

search under the Fourth Amendment. The target of an investigation does

not own the records and therefore has no reasonable expectation of

privacy in them. Section 215 cannot be used to acquire records of U.S.

persons based solely on First Amendment protected activity.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, extending the expiring provisions of the Patriot Act

will ensure that America's law enforcement officials and intelligence

agents are equipped to identify terrorist threats and prevent terrorist

acts. The Patriot Act is an effective tool in the war on terror. As

terrorists show no signs of ending their plots, neither should our laws

that stop them be allowed to sunset. This temporary extension will

facilitate further review and reauthorization of these provisions.

Mr. Speaker, this extension is supported by the Obama administration.

I urge my colleagues to support this extension as well.