Thank you very much, Mr. Conyers. I certainly

appreciate that.

I will certainly never seek to impugn the feelings of those who say

that we have to have the PATRIOT Act in order to protect our country.

We are all patriots here, and we all want America to be protected; but

we have to recognize our constitutional experience here and the reason

why we have a Fourth Amendment that protects people not just from

unreasonable search and seizure, but from unwarranted intrusion by the

government into their lives. When we look at our constitutional experience and all of the efforts

that made it and built up to it, we didn't hear ``give my liberty or

give me a wiretap.'' We didn't hear ``don't tread on me, but it is okay

to spy.'' What we heard was a ringing declaration about freedom, and it

was enshrined in the Constitution.

I stood on the floor of the House way back when the Patriot Act came

forward, voted against it because I read it and understood that it

opened up the door for a broad reach and possibilities of broad reach

by the government into our daily lives.

The gentleman from Wisconsin, who is my friend, correctly pointed out

earlier the difference between National Security Letters and the

Patriot Act. But it also is true that section 505 of the Patriot Act

gave the government the ability to greatly expand who could issue a

national security letter, so much so that nearly 50,000 national

security letters were issued by the FBI in 2006, I think the year was.

They don't have to use section 215 of the Patriot Act. They can just

invoke the national security letter authority and reach into people's

financial records, their medical letters, their reading material.

What is happening to our country? Why are we giving up our basic

liberties? We need to take a stand here, and this is as good a day as

any to take a stand. Many Members of Congress, including those

supported by my friends in the tea party, maintain their goal is to get

rid of big government, get government out of their lives. Well, how

about the Patriot Act, which has the broadest reach and the deepest

reach of government into our daily lives? Shouldn't we be thinking

about that?

Some want to get government out of health care. Some want to get

government out of retirement security. How about getting government out

of people's bedrooms, out of people's financial records, out of

people's medical records?

Vote ``no'' on extending the Patriot Act.