

Dear Senator:

The U.S. House of Representatives has recently passed HR 1955 titled the Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007. This is now up for review in the Senate Judiciary committee, listed as Bill S.1959.

I strongly oppose the Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act, HR. 1955 / S. 1959. This legislation does not criminalize conduct, but may well lead to criminalizing ideas or beliefs in violation of the First Amendment.

Homegrown Terrorism is defined in the Act as: "the use, planned use, or threatened use, of force or violence by a group or individual born, raised, or based and operating primarily within the United States or any possession of the United States to intimidate or coerce the United States government, the civilian population of the United States, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives."

"The term 'ideologically based violence' means the use, planned use, or threatened use of force or violence by a group or individual to promote the group or individual's political, religious, or social beliefs." Thus, "force" and "violence" are used interchangeably. If a group of people blocked the doorway of a corporation, or blocked a sidewalk during a demonstration, it might constitute the use of "force" to promote "political beliefs."

This Act charges that the Internet "has aided in facilitating violent radicalization, ideologically based violence, and the homegrown terrorism process in the United States by providing access to broad and constant streams of terrorist-related propaganda to United States citizens." By targeting the Internet, it may result in increased surveillance of Internet communications in violation of the Fourth Amendment.

This Act would also establish a Commission to study and report on "facts and causes" of "violent radicalism" and "extremist belief systems." It defines "violent radicalism" as "adopting or promoting an extremist belief system for the purpose of facilitating ideologically based violence to advance political, religious, or social change." However, the term "extremist belief system" is not defined.

I believe this Act would undermine and threaten the constitutional rights of U.S. citizens to organize in dissent against violations of their inalienable rights as U.S. citizens.

I strongly urge the Senate to refuse to pass S. 1959, the Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007.

Here is a link to all of the Senators, and their contact information
http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm