



For Immediate Release
Thursday, June 19, 2008

Contact: Kristen Hawn (202) 226-9782

Blue Dog Coalition Endorses Bipartisan FISA Compromise

Washington, D.C. – Today, members of the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition officially endorsed the bipartisan compromise reached by Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman John “Jay” Rockefeller (WV), Senate Intelligence Committee Vice-Chair Kit Bond (MO), House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (MD), and House Minority Whip Roy Blunt (MO) to modernize the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

Upon officially endorsing the compromise, Blue Dog leaders released the following statements:

“This FISA compromise has resulted in legislation that protects American’s civil liberties while giving the intelligence community the tools it needs to effectively combat terrorism,” said **Congressman Mike Ross (D-AR)**, Blue Dog Co-Chair for Communications. “The bill that will be considered by the House also includes critical new accountability provisions and is, overall, an improvement on both the Protect America Act and the Senate FISA bill.”

“The FISA legislation to be considered by the House is a strong improvement over the Senate passed bill, ensures strenuous civil liberty protections to citizens both at home and abroad, and provides for judicial review of the actions taken by telecommunications companies who may have aided in the President’s warrantless wiretapping program so as not to grant a blank check of immunity,” said **Congressman Leonard Boswell (D-IA)**. I applaud the Majority Leader for his months of hard work on this important issue and his willingness to work with me and others to make the improvements and updates to FISA while insuring the protection of Americans, the constitution and our civil liberties.”

“Our constituents rightfully expect that both parties will put aside our differences, come together and produce responsible legislation on important issues like this FISA compromise,” said **Congressman Dennis Moore (D-KS)**. “I join my Blue Dog colleagues in applauding the hard work our congressional leaders put into this compromise FISA bill. We must always remember the awful terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, and keep in mind there are still those who wish to do us harm. I am pleased this compromise legislation will provide our intelligence agencies the flexibility they need to pursue potential terrorists but is balanced by the strong civil liberties in our Constitution.”

-- More --

“My worst fear was the sequel to the movie we saw last August,” said **Congresswoman Jane Harman** (D-CA), Co-Chair of the Blue Dog Task Force on National and Homeland Security. “Pressure from Blue Dogs has averted this horror and efforts by the House Leadership to work with Blue Dogs have produced a responsible bill, which I can support.”

“This FISA agreement is proof positive that when we work together, we can develop a better bill and better policy,” said **Congressman Allen Boyd** (D-FL), Blue Dog Co-Chair for Administration. “The Blue Dogs are proud to endorse a bipartisan FISA bill that increases our nation’s security, protects our civil liberties, and gives our intelligence agencies the tools they need to pursue potential terrorists. I commend the House Leadership for working with us to develop a reasonable and responsible compromise and ultimately a better bill than the Protect America Act or the Senate FISA bill.”

The fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition was formed in 1995 with the goal of representing the center of the House of Representatives and appealing to the mainstream values of the American public. The Blue Dogs are dedicated to a core set of beliefs that transcend partisan politics, including a deep commitment to the financial stability and national security of the United States. Currently there are 49 members of the Blue Dog Coalition. For more information, visit the Blue Dog Website at <http://www.house.gov/ross/BlueDogs/>.

###