The USA Patriot Act and the USA Freedom Act

(Krutz, Glen. *American Government.* University of Oklahoma, 2016

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https://www.washingtonpost.com - Modified)

In the United States, many advocates of civil liberties are concerned that laws such as the USA PATRIOT Act (i.e., Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act), passed weeks after the 9/11 attacks in 2001, have given the federal government too much power by making it easy for officials to seek and obtain search warrants or, in some cases, to bypass warrant requirements altogether. One particularly controversial aspect of the Patriot Act is that it allowed for the bulk collection of Americans cell phone metadata, data that includes the dates and durations of phone calls and logs of call times, but not the content. The government argued these records were needed in the event that some of them might one day be useful in preventing a terrorist plot. In 2015, the National Security Agency ended its bulk collection of data under the Patriot Act. The halt was ordered by Congress in June of that year when it passed the USA Freedom Act to ban metadata collection. Under the new law, the NSA must obtain a court order to receive records about phone numbers suspected of belonging to terrorist suspects.