

Write In

Liz Terwilliger for Congress

A Representative Not A Politician

PA 12th District US House of Representatives



Sept 13th, 2020



Scene from the Tunkhannock Farmers Market at Creekside Gardens Sept 12th

Let's Talk Healthcare

Wednesday, September 16th
8am-4pm
at the Lewisburg Farmer's Market
Lewisburg, PA

A Community Discussion Forum.
Join virtually/in person any time throughout the day!

Participate in our Healthcare Forum in person or virtually. Send us your ideas, concerns or stories related to healthcare via video, audio or text and register to join us via Zoom at <https://mailchi.mp/5ec4e960cac1/healthcare>

You can schedule a time to join us or just show up and participate in the discussion! Share ideas for a discussion group or 1:1 conversation. Proceeds benefit A Community Clinic, Inc in Sunbury, PA. Learn more at <https://facebook.com/events/s/lets-talk-healthcare/238790047452037>

Fire & Rescue Community Event

Saturday, September 12th
10am-4pm

at Mountaineer Park
Monroeton, PA

Community Discussion on Barriers to Recruitment

Share your thoughts on recruitment! Proceeds benefit Monroe Hose Co. in Monroeton, PA. Learn more at www.facebook.com/events/356921852128165

Revisiting the Patriot Act

President Bush signed the USA Patriot Act into law on October 26th, 2001. It had moved quickly through Congress. The original bill was passed the Senate on October 11th and the House passed its version on October 12th. The final, compromise bill was introduced in the House October 23rd. It passed the House the next day and the Senate on the 25th. This rate of action left little time for public input or for lawmakers to debate the far reaching implications of the legislation, a point argued on the floor of the Senate by Senator Feingold. He eloquently argued for more consideration, concluding that "[T]he Congress will fulfill its duty only when it protects both the American people and the freedoms at the foundation of American society."¹

Since being signed into law, aspects of the original legislation have been ruled unconstitutional and others have been revised through subsequent legislation or expired, but the bulk of the bill remains intact and in effect. One section, expanding the definition of domestic terrorism (Sec. 802) remains unchanged and has potential implications in the current climate.

Section 802 of the Patriot Act, Public Law 107-56², defined domestic terrorism as "[A]ctivities that involve acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State; appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States"

This definition is very broad. Actions only have to "appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce." With use of "or" instead of "and" one could be accused of domestic terrorism for acts dangerous to human life that violate criminal laws and 1) appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population or 2) influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion. There is no need for mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping to be involved. Peaceful protesters marching in the street in violation of jaywalking or even Coronavirus laws in an attempt to influence the public and government to change could by the current definition be labeled domestic terrorists. So by the legal definition, President Trump is correct when he refers to protesters as domestic terrorists.

Is this really the definition we want? Being labeled a terrorist has significant implications for one's rights under the law. We need to be able to investigate and prosecute domestic terrorists. We need to amend the definition so that it cannot be easily applied to peaceful protesters exercising their 1st Amendment right to "peacefully assemble and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

In the wake of the September 11th attacks we surrendered civil liberties in the name of security. Nineteen years later, is well past time revisit the Patriot Act, one provision at a time, and protect or win back our rights.

-Liz Terwilliger

¹- Senator Feingold's full remarks: www.911memorial.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/2001%20oct%2C25%20Debate%20in%20the%20Senate%20on%20the%20USA%20PATRIOT%20Act%20of%202001_selections.pdf

²- The USA Patriot Act (PL 107-56): <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=5926348-National-Security-Archive-U-S-Congress-Public>