



**News from Congressman**

# **Tom Lantos**

**12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of California  
San Mateo/San Francisco**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FOR INFORMATION CALL**  
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## **Lantos Supports Legislation to Roll Back Intrusions of the Patriot Act**

**Washington, DC** – Congressman Tom Lantos (D-San Mateo/San Francisco) today voted to reverse a provision of the USA Patriot Act that lets federal investigators check the lending records of libraries and track bookstore sales, but keeps librarians and booksellers from alerting their patrons to the practice.

A proposed amendment to a Justice Department spending bill, the measure was defeated on a near party-line vote. White House advisors had threatened that they would recommend that President Bush veto the spending bill if it included the amendment. Republican maneuvering on the House floor gradually whittled away several supporting votes, which Lantos called “a disgrace that mocks the legislative process.”

“Americans should be able to read freely without fear of government monitoring and intrusion,” Lantos said in advocating adoption of the amendment. “Unfortunately, the so-called Patriot Act has opened the door for such snooping without holding the FBI to the standards normally required to obtain a search warrant. And evidently, many House Republicans want to leave that door ajar.”

The measure would have reinstated legal standards for investigations of libraries and bookstores that were in place before Congress passed the Patriot Act in October 2001. It was based on the Freedom to Read Act (H.R. 1157), which Lantos is co-sponsoring; he plans to continue to press for passage of this bill.

“In the immediate wake of September 11, the Patriot Act was supposed to make us safer,” Lantos said. “Significant flaws in America's security infrastructure had been exposed, and needed to be addressed. That is why 357 out of 435 members of the House and 98 of the 100 Senate members voted in favor of the multi-faceted bill. But since then, there have been repeated abuses as federal agents have used expanded powers to push to the limits of the Constitution. It is high time for Democrats and Republicans to come together again to overwhelmingly support revisions in the law.”

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