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Poll of Iowa Voters Shows Clear Support for Ending the Patriot Act in Its Current Form

NEW YORK – The American Civil Liberties Union released the results of a poll today showing decisive support among Iowa voters for substantive reform to the U.S. government’s surveillance practices. The survey, conducted jointly by a bipartisan pair of research firms, found nearly two-thirds of Iowans believe that the Patriot Act should not be reauthorized in its current form.

This support for reform remains constant regardless of party affiliation, age, or gender. Millennials and independents, in particular, favor reining in the government’s authority to surveil American citizens. The poll also found more than three in four Iowa voters are concerned that the government is storing American’s personal information.

There was considerable consensus around several arguments in favor of strengthening American’s privacy rights. Eighty-one percent of respondents found it persuasive that the local police and the FBI should have a get a warrant in order to search phone and email records. Similarly, more than 75 percent believed that the government’s current ability to access personal conversations was a reason to implement reform.

Congress is currently considering reauthorizing components of the Patriot Act, including the controversial Section 215. This provision is being used to authorize bulk collection of telephone metadata despite a federal appeals court ruling earlier this month finding the program illegal – a case brought to court and argued by the ACLU.

The poll, conducted by Global Strategy Group and G² Public Strategies, surveyed 408 likely voters in Iowa between April 24 and April 28, 2015. The results are at:

https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/iowa_privacy_poll_results.pdf

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The ACLU of Iowa is a private, non-partisan organization that fights to advance civil liberties for all. It is the state affiliate of the national American Civil Liberties Union. The ACLU prides itself in upholding everyone’s civil liberties, no matter who they are or what they believe. We work to assure the rights of all Iowans – from atheists to devout Christians, from labor unions to businesspeople and more – to make sure the constitutional rights of all are preserved. For more information, please go to www.aclu-ia.org

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