

have shown under tremendously difficult circumstances, and the sacrifices our men and women in uniform have made to ensure that Afghanistan does not become a haven for terrorists again.

One of the keys to that is that no society can be free, no society can have true safety and security unless the women in the society also have safety and security. So I thank Senator CASEY for his leadership in ensuring that we stand by the Afghan women because we cannot succeed in Afghanistan if women go back to what they endured under the Taliban, which was horrific and was wrong, and none of us should accept.

So Senator CASEY really has been a leader, and I thank him for being so concerned about what will happen in Afghanistan and working to make sure it never becomes a haven for terrorists again; that women in Afghanistan can live with security; that women and girls can go to school; that they can contribute to Afghan society and take part in free elections; and that Afghanistan will be a place where women will no longer be brought into soccer stadiums and violated.

So I thank Senator CASEY for this amendment and bringing it forward. I am very proud to cosponsor it. As Senator CASEY mentioned, our amendment would ensure adequate staffing at polling stations by female officers so that when they have elections, this would improve the security of those stations, making sure women can come forward and vote. It would increase the awareness and responsiveness among Afghan National Army and national police personnel regarding the unique challenges women confront when joining those forces. Yes, women—some of them—are now joining the Afghan security forces to defend their nation.

The amendment would focus on improving the recruitment and retention of women in Afghan security forces, and it would ensure that as we enter the bilateral security agreement that DOD will produce a strategy to promote the security of Afghan women and girls.

These issues are very important. I commend our men and women in uniform for everything they have done in Afghanistan to prevent Afghanistan from being a haven for terrorists and to ensure that women and girls can live securely and won't be violated the way they were when the Taliban was in charge of Afghanistan. The images so many of us saw were beyond the word "outrageous." We can't even describe the horrific way women and girls were treated—worse than second-class citizens—under the Taliban.

This amendment will ensure what we all understand to be the bottom line: that no strategy in Afghanistan can succeed if women are not an integral part of that strategy, if women aren't allowed to have the security, the dignity, and the freedom all people deserve.

I thank Senator CASEY for his leadership. I hope my colleagues in the Senate will adopt this amendment because last year when we considered Defense authorization, the Senate passed a similar provision by unanimous consent. So I hope my colleagues will do the same and pass the Casey-Ayotte amendment to promote the security of Afghan women and girls; as we look to the bilateral security agreement, as we look to working with our coalition partners as we are drawing down in Afghanistan, we will not leave the Afghan women and girls behind and we will ensure that Afghanistan does not become a haven for terrorists again.

I thank Senator CASEY for allowing me to speak on this very important issue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with Senator WYDEN for 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SURVEILLANCE REFORM

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, to start, I would like to pay tribute to my two colleagues, Senator CASEY and Senator AYOTTE, for their focus on human rights and particularly the rights of women wherever those women may live.

I rise tonight to talk about the rights that are enshrined in our Bill of Rights. To that particular key concern of Americans, I wish to talk about the importance of reforming our domestic surveillance laws.

As Senator WYDEN and I both enter this discussion, we have one general goal in mind; that is, to find a proper balance between keeping our Nation safe from terrorism and still protecting our cherished constitutional rights.

Senator WYDEN and I are both members of the Senate Intelligence Committee. We have argued for years that the government's domestic surveillance authorities need to be narrowed, and we are going to keep leading this fight in the days, weeks, and months to come. As part of this ongoing effort, we recently introduced comprehensive bipartisan legislation that would end the NSA's selection of millions of innocent Americans' private phone records, shield Americans from warrantless searches of their communications, and install a constitutional advocate at the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.

We believe that overly intrusive domestic surveillance programs, misleading statements made by senior intelligence officials, and revelations about how secret courts have handed down secret rulings on secret law have eroded the trust and confidence of the

American people. Simply put, we need to restore this trust, and the best way to do that is to carve out time and hold a vigorous and substantive debate here on the Senate floor—a debate the American people have demanded and deserve.

Senator LEAHY, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, introduced his own comprehensive reform proposal last month with Representative SENSENBRENNER. Representative SENSENBRENNER is a key figure because he was the original author of the PATRIOT Act. He has had concerns. He has joined forces with Senator LEAHY. This bipartisan plan, the Leahy-Sensenbrenner plan, includes many of the proposals Senator WYDEN and I have long called for, and we are proud to support this effort.

Let me be clear. This issue is not going away. It will not go away because more and more Americans and more and more of our colleagues are coming to understand the true overreach of our Nation's surveillance programs and the effect on American privacy. This issue is not going to go away because we are not going to stop shining a light on the potential for future abuse that comes with our government's secret interpretation of its authorities under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

I truly believe that ultimately our efforts—the efforts of Senator WYDEN, Chairman LEAHY, Representative SENSENBRENNER, Senator PAUL, Senator BLUMENTHAL, the Presiding Officer, myself, and a growing number of others—will lead to a majority of this Congress acting in commonsense ways to protect the privacy of Americans.

We are here today on the floor in the midst of consideration of a very critical piece of legislation for our national security and for the well-being of our men and women in uniform, the Defense Authorization Act. I am a member of the Armed Services Committee. I have the great privilege of chairing the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces. I know as well as anyone that this is a must-pass bill. The issues we debated this week related to Guantanamo Bay and the scourge of sexual assault on our military are matters that rightfully demand significant and thoughtful time on the Senate floor. While I think Senator WYDEN and I would agree that this week's debate on the National Defense Authorization Act is not the right time for a full, comprehensive debate on surveillance reform, I do believe it is the right time to begin that conversation.

Senator WYDEN has introduced a smart pro-transparency, pro-accountability amendment, and that amendment is the right place to start. His amendment is based on the work we have been doing for a number of years now. That is why I am a proud cosponsor and a strong supporter.

This amendment would increase the transparency of domestic surveillance programs, and I think it should—and I