

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5211

To prohibit funds from being used to implement the Internet Covert Operations Program under the United States Postal Inspection Service, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 15, 2023

Mr. GAETZ introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability

A BILL

To prohibit funds from being used to implement the Internet Covert Operations Program under the United States Postal Inspection Service, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “USPIS Surveillance
5 Protection Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds as follows:

8 (1) The United States Postal Service has been
9 operating a clandestine domestic surveillance pro-

1 gram of Americans’ social media activity known as
2 the Internet Covert Operations Program (iCOP).

3 (2) iCOP is part of the United States Postal
4 Inspection Service which is the law enforcement and
5 security component of USPS.

6 (3) A March 25, 2022, report by the USPS In-
7 spector General stated: “We determined that certain
8 proactive searches iCOP conducted using an open-
9 source intelligence tool from February to April 2021
10 exceeded the Postal Inspection Service’s law enforce-
11 ment authority”.

12 (4) The USP Inspection Service is operating
13 outside of its USPS jurisdiction when it monitors
14 internet users’ sharing of information as its jurisdic-
15 tion is narrowly defined within postal mail only.

16 (5) The iCOP program is a violation of privacy;
17 it encroaches upon the private lives of Americans
18 and seeks to curb constitutional rights of the First
19 Amendment.

20 (6) iCOP is not only illegal for operating out-
21 side of its stated jurisdiction, but also politically mo-
22 tivated in its target.

23 **SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON FUNDING OF PROGRAM.**

24 No Federal funds (including amounts available in the
25 Postal Service Fund established under section 2003 of

1 title 39, United States Code) may be used to implement,
2 conduct, or otherwise carry out the Internet Covert Oper-
3 ations Program operated by the United States Postal In-
4 spection Service or any other domestic surveillance pro-
5 gram with targets that do not have an identified connec-
6 tion to the mail, postal crimes, or the security of Postal
7 Service facilities or personnel, or with politically motivated
8 targets.

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