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House Intelligence Agrees to Work Plan on NSA, FISA Oversight

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S Rep. Pete Hoekstra, R-Mich, Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and Committee Ranking Member Jane Harman, D-Calif., today announced that the committee has agreed to a process to expand committee oversight of the National Security Agency’s Terrorist Surveillance Program and conduct a comprehensive review to modernize FISA.

“The committee has agreed to a process that allows us to move forward with expanded oversight into these two critical national security issues,” Hoekstra said. “We will work with the White House to have the Members of one of the House Intelligence subcommittees fully briefed on the NSA program to expand and increase oversight of this critical terrorism prevention tool. The committee will also begin a much-needed examination of FISA with an eye toward modernizing it to account for current and future technological advances.”

Under the agreement, House Intelligence will submit detailed questions to the Justice Department on the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and how it actually works. The committee will then conduct a closed-door briefing with relevant agencies to discuss FISA operations and authorities. The committee will also conduct an open hearing to help improve public understanding of the actual implementation and use of the FISA statute.

“This agreement is progress,” Harman said. “I believe we will still need a full and complete briefing for the entire committee on operational details. This program must comply with FISA.”