

Congress Quietly Passed a Bill Allowing Warrantless Searches of Homes—Only 1% Opposed It

A major red flag was buried in the text of a bill with a seemingly harmless title.

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A bill that will allow homes to be searched without a warrant was passed with overwhelming support by the United States Congress, and signed into law by President Trump—and it happened with no media coverage and very little fanfare.

On the surface, [House Joint Resolution 76](#) looks harmless. The title of the bill claims that its purpose is “Granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact relating to the establishment of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission.”

“Whereas the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, an interstate compact agency of the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the State of Maryland, provides transportation services to millions of people each year, the safety of whom is paramount; Whereas an effective and safe Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority system is essential to the commerce and prosperity of the National Capital region; Whereas the Tri-State Oversight Committee, created by a memorandum of understanding amongst these 3 jurisdictions, has provided safety oversight of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.”

The proposal for a safety commission to act as a wing of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority may sound logical, when its power includes thing such as the ability to “Adopt, revise, and distribute a written State Safety Oversight Program” and to “Review, approve, oversee, and enforce the adoption and implementation of WMATA’s Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan.”



However, there is one major red flag buried within the text of the bill that stems from the list of “powers” given to the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission, and it violates one of the basic tenets of the U.S. Constitution.

“In performing its duties, the Commission, through its Board or designated employees or agents, may: Enter upon the WMATA Rail System and, upon reasonable notice and a finding by the chief executive officer that a need exists, upon any lands, waters, and premises adjacent to the WMATA Rail System, including, without limitation, property owned or occupied by the federal government, for the purpose of making inspections, investigations,

examinations, and testing as the Commission may deem necessary to carry out the purposes of this MSC Compact, and such entry shall not be deemed a trespass.”

The text gives the Commission the authority to enter property near the Metro Rail System “*without limitation*” and without a warrant, for the purpose of “*making inspections, investigations, examinations, and testing.*”

This clearly goes against the Fourth Amendment, which [states](#) that Americans’ rights “*to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause.*”

When the bill was brought to a vote in the House of Representatives, there were only five Congressmen who voted against it: Representatives Justin Amash, a Republican from Michigan; Walter Jones, a Republican from North Carolina; Thomas Massie, a Republican from Kentucky; Alex Mooney, a Republican from West Virginia; and Mark Sanford, a Republican from South Carolina.

Amash [called out](#) the hypocrisy surrounding the fact that even though this legislation is in clear violation of the Constitution, it was passed by Congress with overwhelming support.

“Only 5 of us voted against bill allowing govt to enter/search private property in parts of VA, MD & DC w/o warrant,” He wrote on Twitter.

Only 5 of us voted against bill allowing govt to enter/search private property in parts of VA, MD & DC w/o warrant. <https://t.co/SVhTWqbPaB>

— Justin Amash (@justinamash) [July 18, 2017](#)

This is not the first time Congress has quietly passed a bill that will take away some of the most basic rights from law-abiding citizens in the U.S., and it won’t be the last. One of the most important things to remember about this legislation is that it was ignored by the media, and while it may only affect the Washington D.C. metro area now, it could be laying the blueprint for future legislation across the country.

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