

PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN FOR THE Constitution



Congress's Complicity

Weakening constitutional protections against Executive Branch abuses

OUR CONSTITUTION	HOW CONGRESS SUPPORTED CONSTITUTIONAL VIOLATIONS
<p>First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth Amendments</p>	<p>Congress passed and reauthorized the USA PATRIOT Act, which contains numerous Bill of Rights violations, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loosening standards and reducing or eliminating court oversight for searches of private records, communications, homes, and offices. • Covering up legal abuses through permanent gag orders that silence recipients of orders to hand over their customers' private records.
<p>First and Fourth Amendments <i>Prohibits unreasonable and unwarranted searches and seizures of private property.</i></p>	<p>Congress has failed to remedy the Executive Branch's secret warrantless wiretapping program, which was initiated as early as February 2001.</p> <p>Congress has failed to remedy abuses of National Security Letters (administrative, warrantless subpoenas for private information that are accompanied by a gag order preventing the recipient from disclosing the existence or contents of the letter to anyone other than legal counsel).</p> <p>Congress passed the Protect America Act and the FISA Amendments Act, which legalized warrantless domestic wiretapping.</p>
<p>Article 1, Section 1 of the Constitution <i>Gives Congress the sole power to make laws.</i></p>	<p>Congress has failed to remedy the use of presidential signing statements that allow the Executive to flout laws legitimately passed by Congress.</p>
<p>Article I, Section 9 <i>Forbids Congress from suspending habeas corpus, except during rebellion or invasion.</i></p> <p>Sixth and Eighth Amendments <i>Provides rights for the accused and prohibits cruel and unusual punishment.</i></p> <p>Article VI, Paragraph 2 <i>Establishes the Constitution, U.S. laws, and international treaties as "the supreme law of the land."</i></p>	<p>In pursuing the "war on terror," the Executive and the Congress have engaged in activities that violate the U.S. Constitution and international treaties to which the U.S. is a signatory.</p> <p>For example, the President called for and Congress passed the Military Commissions Act, which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condone torture and allows coerced testimony, including confessions obtained through torture, to be used as evidence. • Denies habeas corpus (the nearly 800-year-old right to challenge one's detention) to detainees both in the U.S. and abroad, including "enemy combatants" at the Guantánamo Bay detention center. • Raised worldwide ire against the U.S. because it conflicts with several of our treaty obligations, including the Geneva Conventions.

Want to help remedy these constitutional violations? Join the People's Campaign for the Constitution!
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