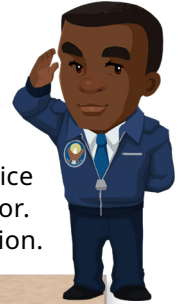




## USA PATRIOT Act of 2001

Have you ever worked on a group project that didn't go well? One reason a group fails is because it doesn't communicate very well. If members don't share information and ideas, nothing gets done. That was the concept behind the USA PATRIOT Act. The law was created to prevent terrorist attacks. To do that, it increased the government's powers. It allowed intelligence agencies and police to share information about threats. It required financial organizations to report suspicious behavior. And it increased the government's ability to **surveil**, or monitor, people's actions and communication.



### "Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT) Act of 2001"

#### Communication & Controls

The USA PATRIOT Act:

- allowed police, defense, and intelligence officials to share information
- tripled the number of customs, border patrol, and immigration agents
- established new reasons for deporting foreign nationals or denying them entry into the U.S.
- made harsher penalties for terrorist acts

#### Financial Reporting

Banks, investment companies, etc. have to track & report:

- possible **money laundering** (hiding stolen money through bank or business transfers)
- suspicious client behavior
- transactions involving foreign countries that are tied to terrorism
- transactions involving foreign financial institutions

#### Investigative Powers

Federal agents were allowed to:

- eavesdrop on people's private conversations, emails, and web browsing
- get court orders without probable cause and use them to access business records
- use court orders to access personal voicemails, credit card data, and bank records
- use warrants to search private property and delay telling the owner

### How Did We Get Here?

On September 11, 2001, the United States experienced the largest terrorist attack on U.S. soil. Four airplanes were hijacked by foreign terrorists. Three were flown into buildings, and one crashed in a Pennsylvania field. Almost 3,000 Americans were killed in one day. The attack was shocking and showed how communication between different law enforcement agencies had failed. To be better prepared to prevent future attacks, President George W. Bush signed the USA PATRIOT Act into law.



### How Is It Used?

The USA PATRIOT Act is used to prevent terrorist attacks. Because government agencies and financial institutions share information, suspicious activities are spotted quickly. This allows agents to act immediately. The PATRIOT Act has helped bring terrorists to trial in several states. And such actions have helped avoid deadly attacks.

#### Privacy vs. Protection

The USA PATRIOT Act increased national security. It also raised criticisms. The Act let the government collect "bulk" telephone data from everyone, not just suspected terrorists. Critics said this violated the **Fourth Amendment** (the right to privacy and the need to get search warrants based on probable cause).

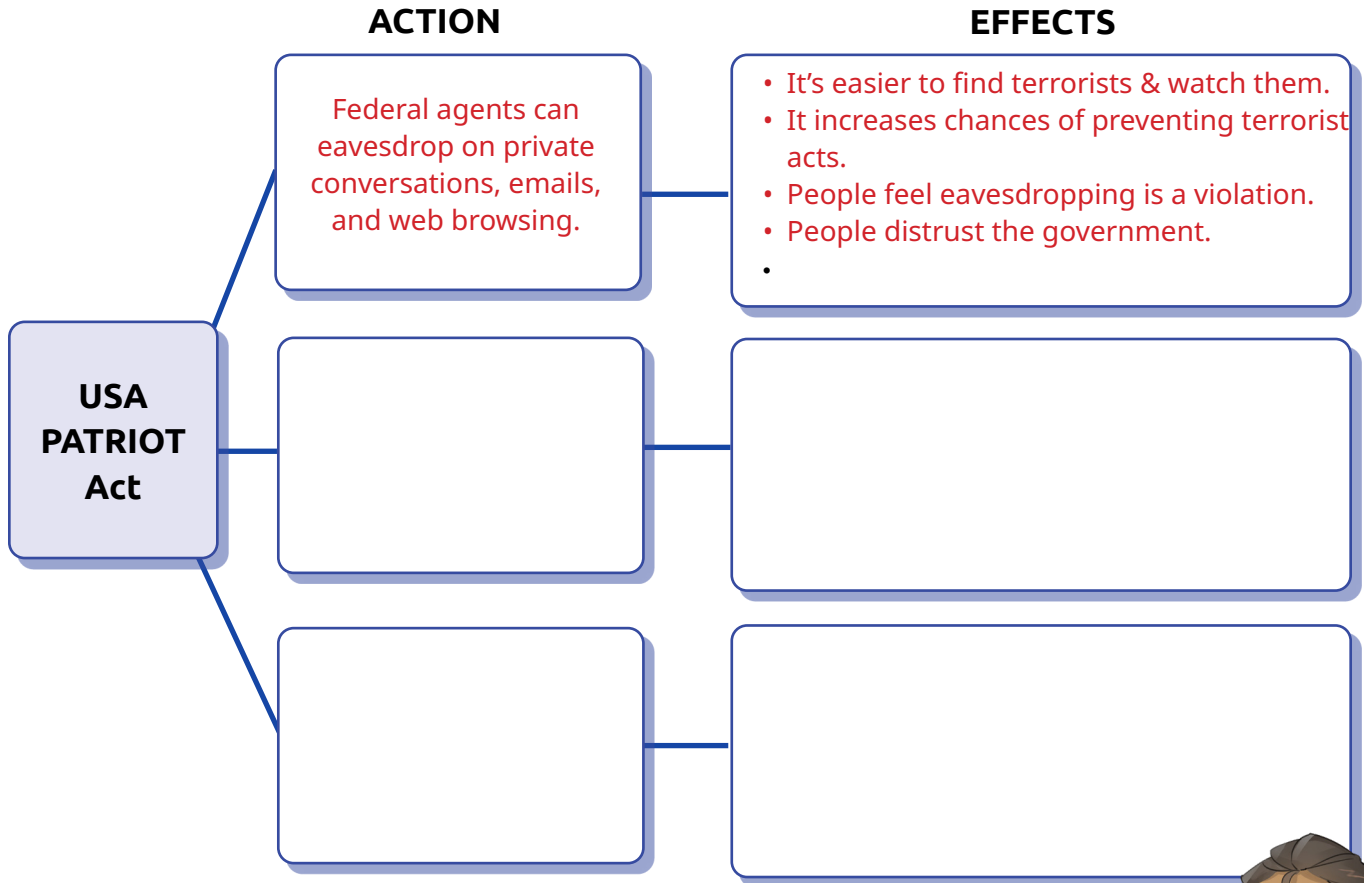


In 2015, President Obama and Congress modified the PATRIOT Act. It's called the USA FREEDOM Act, and it bans the bulk collection of private phone data. It also requires the government to show "reasonable" suspicion (facts showing a tie to terrorism) before monitoring someone.



## USA PATRIOT Act of 2001

**A. Creating Connections.** Identify three actions allowed by the USA PATRIOT Act. Then list the effects each action could have on terrorism, individuals, a community, or on the country. Effects can be positive or negative (see the example). Write as many as you can.



**B. Reflective Thoughts.** The government must protect its people from threats, but also protect their rights. Sometimes those two roles clash. How do you think the government should do both? Answer the prompt using complete sentences. Give two reasons to support your claim.

What is the correct balance between the government protecting the public from terrorist threats while also protecting people's rights? Explain your answer.



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