



March 10, 2026

Dear Members of Congress,

We are former employees of the U.S. intelligence community and/or veterans of the U.S. armed forces. We are writing today to urge Congress to pass the Daniel Ellsberg Press Freedom and Whistleblower Protection Act, set to be introduced by Rep. Rashida Tlaib this week. The bill provides necessary and needed reforms to the Espionage Act, limiting its use to actual spies as opposed to whistleblowers and journalists.

We know first-hand how secrecy can be abused by the executive branch to hide its own wrongdoing from the citizenry and Congress alike. Bipartisan administrations have misled the American people about wars and their pretexts, engaged in unconstitutional surveillance, and overseen violations of the laws of international armed conflict. While classification is not supposed to be used to conceal misconduct, the executive branch has misused this system to conceal matters of grave public concern from the American public.

This secrecy has been enforced through the use of the draconian, antiquated Espionage Act. In spite of its name, the Act does not merely apply to spies and saboteurs. This law has become the government's go-to weapon against patriotic public servants who, in seeking to uphold their oath to our Constitution, alert the public about government criminality. The prosecution of whistleblowers has also enabled the surveillance of journalists, and recently, the government has moved from applying this law to government insiders to wielding it against a publisher of truthful information engaged in journalistic activities previously understood to be protected by the First Amendment.

The founding of our Republic is based on the consent of the governed. When the government makes war or spies on its own people in secret, and seeks to use the threat of criminal prosecution to maintain that secrecy, this core principle is severely undermined. The Espionage Act must be reformed not only because it is intolerable that patriotic public servants acting in good faith are prosecuted as though they were spies, but also because it is a serious threat to our democracy.

The Daniel Ellsberg Press Freedom and Whistleblower Protection Act is a necessary, common sense reform to the Espionage Act. The bill does not touch the provisions of the Espionage Act that apply to actual spies, but instead amends two sections of the Act weaponized against

truthtellers. This includes limiting those sections' criminal reach to those who have a duty to protect classified information and act with the intent to harm the United States.

We urge you to support the Daniel Ellsberg Press Freedom and Whistleblower Protection Act by becoming an original co-sponsor, pushing for it to be brought to a vote, and voting for it.

Sincerely,

Brett Weimer, SGM(Ret.) USA SF

Christian Sorensen, Former USAF Arabic Linguist

Col L.B. Wilkerson, USA (Ret.)

Coleen Rowley, retired FBI Agent and former Minneapolis Division Legal Counsel

CPT Josphine Guilbeau, Former US Army Intelligence Officer

Elizabeth Murray

Gina Bua, U. S. Army (Ret.)

Jeffrey Sterling, Former CIA Officer

John Kiriakou, Former CIA Counterterrorism Officer

Karen Kwiatkowski, Lt Col, USAF (Ret.)

Lisa Ling

Major General Dennis Laich, US Army Retired, Executive Director, The Eisenhower Media Network

Matthew Hoh, Senior Fellow, Eisenhower Media Network, former US Marine Corps officer

Pierre Hollis

Thomas Drake, former NSA senior executive and whistleblower (indicted under the Espionage Act by Obama Admin)

William J. Astore, Lt Col, USAF (Ret.)