



VETERANS FOR A STRONG AMERICA

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December 2, 2015

Senator Ted Cruz is a National Security Champion. Period.

Over the past week, Senator Ted Cruz has been attacked by presidential campaign rival Senator Marco Rubio over a vote regarding the bulk collection of data by the NSA. The NSA has come under attack by privacy groups for scooping up, indiscriminately, meta-data from the digital fingerprints left behind by everyone – potential terrorists and non-terrorists alike – who use smart phones, computers and more. Senator Cruz voted against this method of data collection and in doing so upheld the wishes of his constituents and a very large segment of the population who are rightly concerned about the erosion of privacy rights in the United States.

As a member of the military community, a Major in the United States Army Reserve and an infantry combat veteran, I have taken a stance different from Senator Cruz on this matter, and have held that the collection of bulk meta-data is not an infringement on the rights of U.S. citizens. However, I have also listened while many principled colleagues, friends, family, national security experts and valued advisors have argued that privacy is a cornerstone of American freedom, and that the United States government and its agencies have a duty to respect Americans' privacy rights or we are in danger of becoming a Police State. They also argue that the NSA's method of data collection is ineffective. In short, this is a 'reasonable people can disagree' issue.

That this matter is being distorted by Senator Marco Rubio for political gain should surprise no one. Early on, Senator Rubio was clearly more interested in appeasing liberal democrat Senator Chuck Schumer, and the so-called 'Gang of 8' voting bloc in the U.S. Senate, than in defending America's border and strengthening our national security laws.

For example, Rubio spearheaded, along with Chuck Schumer and John McCain, an Amnesty bill that would have rewarded illegal aliens who enter the country without permission by allowing them to become U.S. citizens ahead of law abiding migrants waiting to enter the U.S. legally. Our immigration policies reward law breakers. Conversely, Senator Cruz joined Senator Jeff Sessions in identifying 26 of 72 charged or convicted terrorists as foreign-born from places like Bangladesh, Somalia (5), Yemen, Bosnia (6), Uzbekistan (4), Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, Cuba, Syria, Iraq, Sudan (2), Ghana, and Kuwait. Clearly, terrorists are infiltrating the United States through our porous borders and by exploiting our broken immigration system. To add insult to injury, Rubio voted with Senator John McCain and his Gang of 8 against vetting Syrian 'refugees' entering the U.S. despite the fact that ISIS has stated their desire to enter the U.S., and attack our citizens, by infiltrating this group.

VSA's supporters oppose Amnesty, want a secure border, and demand the vetting of every person entering the U.S. -- especially those from regions of the world hostile to U.S. interests. Senator Rubio has voted against our national security interests and with Senator McCain so many times that they are practically indistinguishable. #MarcoMcCain is wrong on national security and wrong about Senator Ted Cruz.

About Vets for a Strong America and Joel Arends: Vets for a Strong America is an Iraq and Afghanistan veterans organization dedicated to mobilizing Americans to communicate the importance of a robust national defense and ensuring that America remains a strong nation by advancing liberty, safeguarding freedom and opposing tyranny. Joel Arends is Chairman of Vets for a Strong American and a combat veteran of the war in Iraq.