



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on July 21, 2017

## House Votes Overwhelmingly to Reauthorize DHS

Despite the best efforts of several liberty-minded legislators, the House of Representatives on July 20 voted 386-41 to renew funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The bill now goes to the Senate for that body's consideration.

For the first time since its creation, the federal DHS is coming up for reauthorization, and a conservative group of congressmen promised to vote "no."



Just prior to the roll call taken in the House of Representatives, the House Liberty Caucus (HLC) issued a statement setting out its position on H.R. 2825, the Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act.

With so many reasons to oppose such a liberty-destroying leviathan, the HLC's statement focuses on the failure of House leadership to make the text of the legislation available to lawmakers.

"The House Liberty Caucus urges opposition to H.R. 2825, Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act. The final text of this 575-page bill was not made available to members of Congress until nearly midnight on Monday, July 17, and the timing of its consideration wasn't announced until Wednesday evening — less than 24 hours ago," the letter explains.

The constitutionally minded bloc believes that such a massive measure at least must be read before congressmen can be counted on to cast an informed vote. "Such a vast, significant piece of legislation demands debate and input from the full membership of the House of Representatives. Instead, this bill overhauling the department and authorizing billions of dollars is being rushed to the floor, ensuring representatives have no time to vet its countless provisions."

Like the members of the House Liberty Caucus, there is a constitutionally minded senator who is working to ensure that bills aren't voted on without sufficient time for study.

In June, Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) reintroduced his "Read the Bills" resolution which would mandate that no measure be put up for an up or down vote without giving legislators an appropriate amount of time to read it. "Legislation is too often shoved through Congress without proper hearings, amendments, or debate, as the secrecy surrounding the Senate's health care bill and the pressure to vote for it with little time to fully evaluate the proposal once again remind us," said Dr. Paul. "If we are to answer to the American people, it is imperative we pay close attention to the legislation we pass."

"I stand by my pledge to increase transparency and accessibility in the U.S. Senate, and my resolution will give members ample time to read all legislation before they vote."

When it comes to the Department of Homeland Security, there are so many other agencies that come under that enormous umbrella — including CBP, the Coast Guard, FEMA, ICE, and TSA — that are the sources of so much invasive, tyrannical, liberty-threatening regulations and should be immediately shut down.

Despite the breathtaking breadth of the deprivations of liberty committed by this federal agency, it is



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perhaps the misdeeds of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) that have summoned the loudest outcry from Americans.

In 2015, Ron Paul wrote an essay enumerating the reasons the TSA should be shuttered. He stated:

More terrorist attacks have been thwarted by airline passengers than by the TSA! The TSA may be ineffective at stopping terrorists, but it is very effective at harassing innocent Americans like Lucy Forck. Three-year-old Lucy, who uses a wheelchair, not only had to endure an intrusive screening from TSA agents, but the agents also took away her beloved stuffed animal.

When not abusing children who use wheelchairs, TSA subjects airline passengers to rules that seem designed to make air travel as unpleasant as possible. For example, TSA recently forced a Campaign for Liberty staffer to throw away a jar of Nutella she had in her carry-on luggage. I am sure all airline passengers feel safe knowing that TSA is protecting them from sandwich spreads.

Ending the TSA would return responsibility for airline security to airports and airlines. Private businesses have a greater incentive than a government bureaucracy to ensure their customers' safety. Those conservatives who think this is a radical idea should try to think of one area where they trust government bureaucrats to do a better job than private business owners.

In light of the nearly daily assault on liberty carried out by DHS, one is reminded of the words of the Declaration of Independence, wherein Thomas Jefferson explained why the colonies were justified in breaking the ties that bound them to Britain:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

Is there any doubt that the DHS has become “destructive” of the ends for which government was instituted? Should it not, then, be abolished without delay?

There is little hope, however, that senators will act courageously and constitutionally unless Americans contact them immediately and demand they vote to refuse to reauthorize the Department of Homeland Security.

Photo: Screenshot of [DHS web page](#)



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