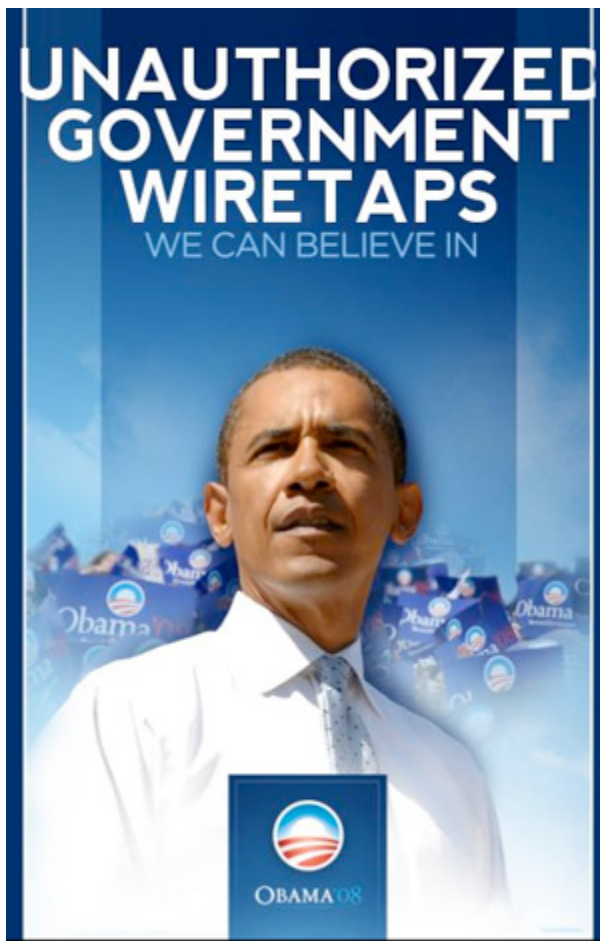




Barack Obama Breaks Promise, Flip Flops, and supports Telco's

Posted Jul 9, 2008 by [Dan Kimerling](#)



Today, Democratic Presidential candidate Barack Obama voted for [H.R.6304](#), which amends the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (F.I.S.A). In doing so he voted to give telecommunication providers immunity against civil damages that they might incur in the course of enabling the government to execute wiretaps and other types of electronic surveillance. He did so, after an amendment to the bill that would have stripped out the immunity provision, [S.Amdt. 5064](#), was defeated 32-66. In voting for the bill, Obama acted in direct contradiction to his earlier statements. In 2007 Bill Burton, an Obama campaign spokesman, said [“To be clear: Barack will](#)

[support a filibuster of any bill that includes retroactive immunity for telecommunications companies.”](#)

The original F.I.S.A statute was passed in 1978 in order to protect civil liberties against overly expansive government surveillance, and had clear penalties of [\\$100 per person, per day, plus punitive damages](#), for telecommunications companies that conducted electronic surveillance without judicial oversight. Given that each day tens of millions of people have their data go across the networks of some of the larger telcos, the risk that these companies faced by working with the government on extra-judicial wiretaps was extreme. In giving companies that work with the government immunity from these penalties, H.R. 6304, and Barack Obama who voted for it, just took away the only reason stopping AT&T, Verizon, and others from helping the government use extra-judicial wiretaps. In voting for the bill, Obama not only helped the telco's, but also broke his promise to protect the American people from expansive government surveillance.

The image above was created with [this site](#), which lets you add whatever message you want to Obama's campaign platform.

Note that TechCrunch [endorsed Barack Obama](#), partially on his policies towards telecommunications companies.

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