

# NRA: Federal surveillance policies could lead to gun registry

---

**WT** [washingtontimes.com/news/2014/mar/16/nra-federal-surveillance-policies-could-undermine-](http://washingtontimes.com/news/2014/mar/16/nra-federal-surveillance-policies-could-undermine-)

By David Sherfinski

The [National Rifle Association](#) has filed a friend-of-the-court brief in a case in federal court in New York challenging the federal government's data surveillance techniques, arguing the data collection violates the First Amendment and could undermine federal privacy laws that prohibit the formation of a registry of firearms or gun owners.

The gun rights group is supporting a request by the American Civil Liberties Union to reverse a ruling from the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York that upheld the surveillance policies.

The brief filed this month comes as privacy issues and government spying has once again risen to the forefront after Sen. Dianne Feinstein, California Democrat and chairwoman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, made the stunning accusation on the Senate floor that the CIA snooped through congressional documents related to the country's detention and interrogation techniques.

CIA Director John O. Brennan has denied the snooping and the CIA has filed an official complaint with the Justice Department accusing Senate staffers of having stolen the key CIA document in the first place.

But the NSA case is illustrative of the odd bedfellows the issues of privacy, spying and government surveillance have created in recent years.

In its brief, the [NRA](#) argued the government's mass surveillance program "could provide the government with the means of identifying members and others who communicate with the [NRA](#) and other Second Amendment advocacy groups."

---

## **SEE ALSO: California gun store owner refuses to hand over customer list**

---

"It could provide the means of identifying gun owners without their knowledge or consent, contrary to longstanding congressional policy — a policy that was repeatedly reaffirmed and strengthened by the very Congresses that enacted and reauthorized the legislation at issue in this case."

U.S. Sen. Thad Cochran, Mississippi Republican, recently introduced an [NRA](#)-backed bill that would clarify an existing federal prohibition on storing information acquired during the gun-purchase background check process and extend the prohibition to prevent any federal funds from being used to contribute to nonfederal gun registries.

“There is nothing in law today that says federal resources can’t be used, either intentionally or otherwise by a state or local government, to collect and store personally identifiable information related to legal firearm purchases and ownership,” Mr. Cochran said. “This legislation would close that loophole.”

The bill does not include limitations related to state record keeping for permitting, law enforcement-issued firearms, or lost or stolen guns.

Copyright © 2018 The Washington Times, LLC. [Click here for reprint permission](#).

## The Washington Times Comment Policy

---

The Washington Times is switching its third-party commenting system from Disqus to Spot.IM. You will need to either create an account with Spot.im or if you wish to use your Disqus account look under the Conversation for the link "Have a Disqus Account?". Please read our [Comment Policy](#) before commenting.