Editorial pages around the nation are weighing in:

San Francisco Chronicle:
*“One of the most hotly contested provisions of the Senate’s FISA bill would retroactively grant telecom providers with legal immunity...”
*“The suppression of those lawsuits would effectively wipe out an opportunity for Americans to finally get a sense of the scope of the Bush administration’s defiance of [federal surveillance law].”
*“Fortunately, key members of the House...appear determined to resist...”

Los Angeles Times:
*“For the phone companies, this resilience of Congress to granting them immunity is a great victory... the net result is that lawsuits against them might be the only way to obtain an accounting of exactly what the Terrorist Surveillance Program involved — wiretapping only, or the widespread data mining of phone records? If the president really wants to spare the companies the threat of litigation, he must level with Congress of phone records? If the president really wants to spare the companies the threat of litigation, he must level with Congress...”

USA Today:
*“Immunity is not warranted and should not be granted by Congress.”
*“As for the phone companies, the resistance in Congress to...”

New York Times:
*“Immunity is not primarily about protecting patriotic businessmen, as Mr. Bush claims. It’s about ensuring that Mr. Bush and his aides never have to go to court to explain how many lies they’ve broken.”

Brattleboro Reformer:
*“Telecom immunity is not primarily about protecting patriotic businessmen, as Mr. Bush claims. It’s about ensuring that Mr. Bush and his aides never have to go to court to explain how many lies they’ve broken.”

Toledo Blade:
*“Naturally, the companies want immunity. But the 1978 FISA law is crystal clear on this...”

Miami Herald:
*“This is nothing less than a cover-up designed to keep the public in the dark about how seriously their constitutional rights were violated.”

Detroit News:
*“Whoever elicited this information from the communications companies clearly had a right to it under the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The Bush administration easily concede the point in demanding the grant of immunity. If the phone companies didn’t do anything illegal, why do they need immunity?”

Bangor Daily News:
*“Rather than broaden the Protect America Act, Congress should scale it back, and the House should refuse the blanket immunity portion of the bill agreed to in a Senate Committee.”

Los Angeles Times:
*“Whoever elicited this information from the communications companies clearly had a right to it under the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The Bush administration easily concede the point in demanding the grant of immunity. If the phone companies didn’t do anything illegal, why do they need immunity?”

Buffalo News:
*“The immunity bill would let the telecommunications companies off the hook, but not administration officials. This is misguided. All those who deliberately broke the surveillance laws should be held to account. If not, we are simply inviting more privacy abuses in the future.”

New Jersey Star Ledger:
*“The immunity bill would let the telecommunications companies off the hook, but not administration officials. This is misguided. All those who deliberately broke the surveillance laws should be held to account. If not, we are simply inviting more privacy abuses in the future.”

Boston Globe:
*“The immunity bill would let the telecommunications companies off the hook, but not administration officials. This is misguided. All those who deliberately broke the surveillance laws should be held to account. If not, we are simply inviting more privacy abuses in the future.”

USA Today:
*“Immunity is not warranted and should not be granted by Congress.”

Aniston Star:
*“The fear: giving government unchecked power here will lead to the sorts of abuses we witnessed in earlier times.”

Miami Herald:
*“This is nothing less than a cover-up designed to keep the public in the dark about how seriously their constitutional rights were violated.”

For a complete list of editorials and links visit: www.eff.org/notelecomamnesty

Nearly 60% of voters oppose immunity for telecom lawbreakers*, and with good reason. Americans don’t want Congress to cover up illegal activities that violate their privacy, and they want the courts to decide if the law has been broken. The nonprofit Electronic Frontier Foundation represents the customers of AT&T in a case against the telecom giant for illegally delivering millions of private communications and records to the NSA. Congress should answer America’s call: Reject telecom immunity and let the courts do their job!

* The Mellman Group poll, October 15, 2007