

June 10, 2026

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Dick Durbin  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Jamie Raskin  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Mark Warner  
Vice Chairman  
Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

The Honorable Jim Himes  
Ranking Member  
House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

Dear Democratic Leaders:

The undersigned civil liberties, civil rights, democracy, and good governance groups urge you to halt advancement of any Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) extension of warrantless surveillance powers given the urgent crisis presented by Donald Trump's selection of Bill Pulte as acting Director of National Intelligence (DNI).

Pulte currently serves as director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA). In that role, Pulte has weaponized his power and access to sensitive information held by the government to drive wrongful, political prosecutions of [Trump's political opponents](#). This includes New York Attorney General Letitia James, Federal Reserve governor Lisa Cook, and Senator Adam Schiff. He has additionally used his perch to inappropriately publicly attack then-Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, [eviscerate internal oversight](#), and [expand his own power](#).

Now-acting DNI Pulte has no known experience conducting, much less overseeing, critical surveillance activities. Nonetheless, he has the power to attack the pillars of democracy — by misusing surveillance, pushing spying agencies he oversees to conduct unlawful spying or otherwise allowing it, providing politically motivated surveillance directly to Trump, and even declassifying or leaking warrantlessly acquired information about those who would challenge the administration. Pulte is currently under investigation by the Government Accountability Office over whether he misused his authority at FHFA, where [he continues](#) to [serve as director](#).

This is a terrifying threat to Americans and the very foundation of American democracy.

Yet Pulte's removal, should it occur, is simply not enough, because his appointment demonstrates that Donald Trump was willing to choose him in the first place. Even if someone else became

DNI tomorrow, it would do nothing to prevent Trump from replacing that person with another henchman.

The best immediately available way to stop such weaponization of surveillance has been debated at length, and has broad, bipartisan support in both chambers: requiring CIA, NSA, and FBI agents to obtain warrants before knowingly searching through FISA information about people in the United States. Indeed, the primary reason the House and Senate have not been provided opportunities to vote on this protection seems to be the likelihood that this “backdoor search loophole” fix would pass if it reached the floor.

While the opportunity to force change is difficult without a gavel, Democrats have extraordinary leverage to avert disaster here. Not only does Republican Leadership need Democrats to advance legislation in the Senate, they also need Democrats in the House. And unlike many other issues, there are clearly votes Democrats can count on from Republicans to enact real warrant requirements that would meaningfully protect our democracy.

Acting DNI Pulte cannot be allowed to take power. And given someone like Bill Pulte can become DNI under these circumstances, no intelligence agency chief should be allowed to rummage through such sensitive information without first obtaining independent review by getting a warrant from a court.

We therefore urge you not to advance any FISA reauthorization without robust warrant protections, and to oppose at every step Trump’s effort to install Pulte or any other henchman in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Anything short of that serves to lock the future of the United States behind authoritarianism.

Sincerely,

Advocacy for Principled Action in Government  
Arab American Institute  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC  
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Center for Democracy & Technology  
Center for Media and Democracy  
Church Women United in New York State  
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW)  
Clean Elections Texas  
Common Cause

Defending Rights & Dissent  
Demand Progress  
Democracy Defenders Action  
Democratic Messaging Project  
Due Process Institute  
Earth Ethics, Inc.  
Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC)  
Faithful Voter Project  
Fight for the Future  
Free Press Action  
Free Speech For People  
Government Information Watch  
Indivisible  
Indivisible Auburn WA  
Indivisible Bellingham (WA)  
Indivisible Eastside  
Indivisible EMF — Edgewood, Milton, & Fife, WA  
Indivisible Gig Harbor  
Indivisible Santa Fe  
Indivisible Washington's 8th District  
Indivisible Westside Los Angeles  
Japanese American Citizens League  
Jewish Climate Action Network, MA  
Lawyers for Good Government  
Long Beach Alliance for Clean Energy  
Make the Road States  
MOVI, Money Out Voters In  
Muslim Advocates  
Muslims for Just Futures  
National Hispanic Media Coalition  
National Organization For Women  
National Tongan American Society  
National Women's Law Center Action Fund  
New America's Open Technology Institute  
North American Climate, Conservation and Environment (NACCE)  
Northwest Indivisible  
OCA Asian Pacific American Advocates, Greater Seattle Chapter  
Our Revolution  
Olympia Indivisible  
P Street

Peace Action  
People For the American Way  
People Power United  
Project On Government Oversight  
Public Citizen  
Restore The Fourth Action  
RootsAction  
Secure Elections Network  
Sky Valley Indivisible  
Southern Poverty Law Center  
Thai Community Development Center (Thai CDC)  
The Nexus of Privacy  
UltraViolet Action  
Venice Resistance  
Walking To Fix Our Democracy  
Wenatchee for Palestine  
Whistleblower & Source Protection Program (WHISPeR) at ExposeFacts  
Win Without War  
X-Lab

**cc: Democratic Members of the House and Senate**