ON JANE HARMAN AND NAO

A number of you have sent this piece, reporting that Jane Harman is trying to shut down the National Applications Office.

> [Harman] has introduced two bills that would shutter the Department of Homeland Security's innocuously-named National Applications Office.
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> In the waning days of the Bush administration, DHS officials began implementing plans to use NAO to oversee the training of military satellites on domestic targets — with funding for the program tucked in last year's stopgap funding funding bill.
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> To the surprise of some in Congress, DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano quietly inserted renewed funding for the program in the "classified annex" to the agency's FY2010 budget.
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> Harman's bill would eliminate the office — and a companion measure from Rep. Norm Dicks (D-Wash.) would completely de-fund NAO.

Glenn Thrush unfortunately ties Harman's actions to the AIPAC-related wiretaps, which has led a number of people (including, perhaps, Thrush) to suggest she's doing this solely because she's smarting about being surveilled.

That's unfortunate, because the surveillance is unrelated, and because the House Committee on Homeland Security—particularly its Chair, Bennie Thompson—has been taking a very proactive lead on this issue from the start. Harman, remember, chairs the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Intelligence, which makes her exactly the right person to oppose this provision put through in the funding bill's classified annex.

Harman, Dicks, and Thompson are doing the right thing in opposing this. Thompson, in particular, has been pushing for some oversight on this for a long time. We should be applauding efforts to insist on that oversight.