

## **Letter: Tim Mahoney is gambling with national security**

Friday, April 11, 2008

Even when U.S. military involvement in Iraq ends, our fight against terrorist enemies will continue indefinitely. The rationale of Congressman Tim Mahoney, D-Palm Beach Gardens, for opposing the bipartisan Senate Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act extension omitted mentioning its specific restrictions to communications with foreign countries. U.S. intelligence agencies have confirmed those countries that provide terrorists sanctuary, financial and material support. The absence of additional attacks on U.S. soil, including the interdiction of several confirmed plots, validates FISA as an invaluable Homeland Security tool.

Telecommunications corporations, with heavy foreign investment, must never become "neutral" enablers of our enemies like media organizations have become.

By opposing FISA and recognizing civil liberties for foreign terrorists, Mahoney is gambling with national security. He did this last year by joining partisan posturing against the surge strategy, which has saved American and Iraqi lives, and averted lethal chaos that the unconditional withdrawal alternative would have caused. Congressman Mahoney's cavalier attitude toward security issues matches his disregard for military mission requirements. Last year he failed to support essential troop-support programs until a non-urgent domestic spending bill was enacted.

Mahoney recently showed outright contempt for military personnel and an insensitivity to their sworn apolitical duties to execute policies of their elected and appointed civilian superiors. A news story last month reported a February incident in a Washington, D.C. wine bar, where Mahoney confronted and badgered an active duty military officer, apparently grand-standing for visiting constituents.

Any competent legislator knows the appropriate, politically appointed civilian Pentagon managers to engage on policy disagreements, since military officers are defenseless against such bullying. Regardless of the issue, the congressman disrespected an active duty soldier and owes all Armed Forces members an unqualified apology.

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