

MEDIA ADVISORY

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For Immediate Release

Event: Friday rally and march spotlight Bush's war on civil liberties and the Bill of Rights, calling for opposition to renewal of Patriot Act.

Date: Friday, December 2nd, 2005

Time 5:00 p.m.

Place: Pioneer Courthouse Square, SW Broadway & SW Yamhill, downtown Portland

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Friday rally and march spotlight Bush's war on civil liberties and the Bill of Rights, calling for opposition to renewal of Patriot Act.

PPRC joins with the ACLU and other supporters of the Constitution and Bill of Rights in calling for opposition to renewal of the Patriot Act, currently making its way through Congress. "The latest word is that the Bush Administration is confronting effective opposition from both Democrats and Republicans in their efforts to make permanent this domestic assault on the rights and liberties of people here in the US," said William Seaman, a volunteer with the PPRC. "Because of the sunset provisions, several key elements of the Patriot Act will expire at the end of this month, so now is the time to make our voices heard in Washington, now is the time to demand that our representatives fight to restore the rights that the Bush Administration wants permanently erased." It is certain that the Patriot Act reauthorization bill will come before Congress in the next few weeks. Key representatives and senators, as well as civil rights advocates, are calling for critical changes in the draft bill to protect rights that have been undermined by the Patriot Act.

"As it stands, the current bill renews the most egregious parts of the Patriot Act, the power to get library and bookstore records without any connection to terrorist activity, the power of 'sneak-and-peak' invasions of privacy, the power of secret eavesdrop and search orders that do not name target or location with no prior court oversight, and many more outrageous provisions that strike at the very heart of our democracy," said Seaman. "But the fight against this disgraceful legislation is on, and if we join with those who are fighting to uphold our Bill of Rights, we can win back and defend these fundamental freedoms."

PPRC expressed backing also for the growing number of Democrats coming out in support of Rep. John Murtha's call for withdrawal from Iraq. "We've very happy to hear that House Democratic leader, Nancy Pelosi, has joined the call for bringing the

troops home,” said Seaman. “We hope that Senator Wyden is listening and is preparing to launch his own vigorous campaign to support the movement to end this war and to get the US out of Iraq.”

Seaman said that the Bush Administration’s recent focus on ‘immigration reform’ is an indication of the level of desperation in the White House. “Scapegoating is the standard response whenever a government’s policies are failing, and the Bush Administration’s attacks on immigrants falls squarely into that disgraceful and discredited strategy,” said Seaman. “We are a nation of immigrants, and we must support and defend all of our brothers and sisters who have come to these shores, often driven by economic deprivation brought about by the policies of our own government, whenever and wherever they face discrimination and bigotry.” PPRC members will travel to Woodburn on Saturday to join with members of PCUN and VOZ to confront local anti-immigration activists.

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