

Eshoo Fights for Freedom to Read

June 15, 2005

Eshoo Fights for Freedom to Read

June 15, 2005

WASHINGTON, DC -- Rep. Anna G. Eshoo (D-CA) today stood with 198 other Democrats, 38 Republicans, and one Independent to support the Freedom to Read amendment to the proposed H.R. 2862, Science, State, Justice & Commerce Appropriations Act for FY 2006. This amendment, which passed 238 to 187, will overturn one of the most controversial provisions of the PATRIOT Act, which currently allows the FBI to gain access to personal library circulation and sales records.

"This is a victory for civil liberties," proclaimed Rep. Eshoo.

The Freedom to Read amendment will stop funding for certain activities authorized by Section 215 of the PATRIOT Act, such as FBI access to library circulation records, patron lists, bookstore sales records, and customer book lists without a court order.

Rep. Eshoo further stressed that the amendment's purpose is to protect civil liberties, not diminish the rule of law; "This amendment does not prevent law enforcement from using various means of access that were available prior to the PATRIOT Act. Search warrants and grand jury subpoenas are still available for legitimate law enforcement purposes and ensure due process."

###