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***CARDIN EXPRESSES SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT  
“CHILLING EFFECT” OF POLICE SURVEILLANCE  
ON PEACEFUL PROTEST GROUPS***

WASHINGTON – Responding to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Maryland’s release of documents detailing 14-months of infiltration and surveillance of Maryland peace and other activist groups, **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin** (D-MD) today called for a full accounting of these surveillance activities by federal, state and local officials.

“All U.S. citizens enjoy the protection of the First Amendment to the Constitution,” said **Senator Cardin**, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. “The Amendment protects ‘the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances’. “Our nation cannot allow police activity that is intended to discourage dissent by Americans who may disagree with certain government policies.”

Federal anti-terrorism guidelines and regulations expressly prohibit the collection or maintenance of “criminal intelligence information about the political, religious or social views, associations, or activities of any individual or any group ... or other organization unless such information directly relates to criminal conduct or activity, and there is reasonable suspicion that the subject of the information is or may be involved in criminal conduct or activity.”

One database entry describes a peace group’s preparation for meetings with then-Congressman Cardin in both Baltimore and Washington in 2005 regarding Iraq War policy.

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