

# Council: Patriot Act goes too far

**SPEAKING OUT: THE SANTA CRUZ CITY COUNCIL OPPOSES PARTS OF ANTI-TERRORISM LEGISLATION.**

By Ken McLaughlin  
Mercury News

Contending that the USA Patriot Act represents an unwarranted assault on civil rights, the Santa Cruz City Council on Tuesday unanimously passed a resolution urging the federal government to rescind parts of the law.

Congress overwhelmingly passed the anti-terrorism legislation after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, making it easier for police to eavesdrop on phone conversations, seize voice messages, track e-mail and obtain certain confidential records.

Civil rights activist Valerie Lasciak said Santa Cruz became the 14th city in the country to take similar action. Most of the cities are college towns such as Berkeley and Cambridge, Mass., but Denver's city council has also condemned the law.

"The only thing that surprises me is that it took us so long to do this," said Vice Mayor Emily Reilly.

Indeed, Santa Cruz in September became the first city in the nation to formally oppose going to war with Iraq, just a week after the liberal beach town gained na-

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# PATRIOT | City council says legislation goes too far

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tional attention as six council members watched medicinal-marijuana activists hand out pot on the steps of City Hall.

For a while, it seemed that the TV satellite antenna had replaced the redwood as the town's semi-official tree.

But the council avoided controversial issues in the weeks before the Nov. 5 election. Many council members privately expressed concerns that the town's leftist image would cause voters to repeal its 7 percent utility tax.

But a measure to repeal the tax went down in flames, so the council seemed to be on fire again Tuesday.

"Where have we been?" joked Mayor Christopher Krohn, who did not seek reelection and will leave the council in two weeks.

Even Councilman Mark Primack, who in the past has accused the council of wasting its time by discussing national and international issues, joined his colleagues this time around.

As a "child of the McCarthy era," when suspected communists were summoned before Sen. Joe McCarthy's House UnAmerican Activities Committee, Primack said he was appalled at throwing around words like "patriot" and "homeland" to rally political support.

"The problem with government is, it's left in the hands of politicians," Primack said.

Celia Scott, a former Santa Cruz mayor, agreed: "My bumper sticker reads: 'Real patriots defend the Constitution.'"

But two speakers Tuesday strongly opposed the measure.

Santa Cruzan Bill Codiga said, "It demeans the legislative process" to elect representatives and then ignore what they decide. "Leave this stuff to them," Codiga urged.

Tom Mullen, another Santa Cruz resident, said he hoped nothing in the resolution would discourage local police from acting on information that would save American lives. What, he asked, would happen if terrorists blew up the Golden Gate Bridge and it came to light that Santa Cruz

## THE RESOLUTION

The Santa Cruz City Council on Tuesday adopted a resolution opposing parts of the USA Patriot Act as well as some Bush administration directives and orders. The resolution says:

The Patriot Act defines "domestic terrorism" so broadly as to equate acts of civil disobedience from lawful advocacy groups such as the anti-abortion group Operation Rescue and environmental group Greenpeace with terrorism, possibly subjecting such groups to invasive surveillance, wiretapping, harassment and criminal penalties.

The act gives the FBI and CIA greater authority to wiretap phones, break into homes, monitor e-mail and survey sensitive medical, financial and education records without having to show evidence of a crime and without proper judicial review.

President Bush has issued an executive order establishing secret military tribunals for terrorism suspects — an action undermining the U.S. government's ability to denounce atrocities carried out by similar tribunals around the world.

Source: Santa Cruz City Council

police didn't pass on vital information to federal authorities that could have prevented it?

We would "look like a bunch of fools," Mullen said.

To address those concerns, Krohn said, the council deleted a section of the resolution saying no city employee should assist with investigations "that are judged to be in violation of individuals' civil rights."

The council Tuesday also unanimously passed another less-controversial resolution aimed at encouraging the feds to ban cruise ships from dumping water containing oil, ballast water and sewage into the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

Similar actions have also been passed by the city councils of Monterey and Pacific Grove, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, and the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.

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