

October 8, 2008
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JPL/Caltech Colleagues for

- Civil Liberties
- The Fourth Amendment
- Privacy Rights
- Open Scientific Research



**Please join us today for dessert on the mall
Wednesday, October 8 at Noon
JPL Mall, at the steps of Building 180**

At noon on the mall, supporters of the lawsuit opposing NASA's background investigations of employees will gather to celebrate the first anniversary of the court injunction that stopped the process. All employees are invited to join us for an opportunity to reflect on the current status and likely future of this effort.

October 5 marks the first anniversary of two significant events at JPL: (1) the day that JPL management set as a deadline for employees to sign up for intrusive HSPD12 background investigations and (2) the day that the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals granted the emergency injunction that has made employee acquiescence to NASA's HSPD12 requirements truly voluntary for the past year.

In the summer of 2007, JPL employees were faced with a difficult decision: we could either sign an authorization to permit any federal agent from any federal agency access to any of our personal information from any source, or we could "voluntarily" resign. When employees challenged the requirement and its related draconian adjudication process as a potentially unconstitutional intrusion into their lives, we were told that that the program would proceed unless successfully challenged in the courts. Administrator Griffin, in his Q&A at JPL on June 4, 2007, stated:

"If you or anyone else wishes to ... disagree with the validity of this law, there is a well-charted path for disagreeing with constitutionality of a law or a regulation. It is an arduous path, but it not unknown, and leads up to the Supreme Court."

Twenty-eight JPL employees chose to follow the arduous path and filed a suit for relief. On October 5, 2007, finding that the suit raises "serious legal and constitutional questions and show(s) the probability of irreparable harm," the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals granted a temporary injunction against the background investigation process.

A year later, the injunction remains in place while the legal case makes its way through the judicial branch. Today we would like to express our deepest gratitude to all supporters, including over 300 JPLers who openly and publicly voiced their objection to the intrusion into their and others' private affairs as well as the hundreds who have supported us in less public but equally meaningful ways.

The 28 JPL Plaintiffs, Nelson et al. v NASA et al.

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