

HR 275

Global Online Freedom Act of 2007

Congress: 110 (2007–2009, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: International Affairs

Introduced: Jan 5, 2007

Current Status: Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 320.

Latest Action: Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 320. (Feb 22, 2008)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/110th-congress/house-bill/275>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Smith, Christopher H. [R-NJ-4]

Party: Republican • **State:** NJ • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors (8 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Wolf, Frank R. [R-VA-10]	R · VA		Jan 5, 2007
Rep. McCotter, Thaddeus G. [R-MI-11]	R · MI		Mar 14, 2007
Rep. Rohrabacher, Dana [R-CA-46]	R · CA		Jul 25, 2007
Rep. Ryan, Tim [D-OH-17]	D · OH		Jul 25, 2007
Rep. Lantos, Tom [D-CA-12]	D · CA		Oct 22, 2007
Rep. Burton, Dan [R-IN-5]	R · IN		Oct 23, 2007
Rep. Wu, David [D-OR-1]	D · OR		Oct 23, 2007
Rep. Sherman, Brad [D-CA-27]	D · CA		Oct 29, 2007

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Energy and Commerce Committee	House	Referred to	Feb 2, 2007
Energy and Commerce Committee	House	Referred to	Feb 2, 2007
Foreign Affairs Committee	House	Reported By	Dec 10, 2007
Judiciary Committee	House	Discharged From	Feb 22, 2008

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

International Affairs

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Global Online Freedom Act of 2007 - (Sec. 3) Defines, for this Act, "United States business" to mean: (1) a company with its principal place of business in the United States or that is organized under the U.S. or state laws; (2) any issuer of a security registered under specified provisions of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934; and (3) any foreign subsidiary of such entities to the extent such entity controls the voting shares or other equities of the foreign subsidiary or authorizes, directs, controls, or participates in acts carried out by the foreign subsidiary that are prohibited by this Act.

Title I: Promotion of Global Internet Freedom - (Sec. 101) Declares that it is U.S. policy to: (1) promote the right to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media; (2) use all appropriate instruments of U.S. influence to support the free flow of information; and (3) deter U.S. businesses from cooperating with Internet-restricting countries in effecting online censorship.

(Sec. 102) Expresses the sense of Congress that: (1) the President should seek international agreements to protect Internet freedom; and (2) some U.S. businesses, in assisting foreign governments to restrict online access to U.S.-supported websites and government reports or to identify individual Internet users, are working contrary to U.S. foreign policy interests.

(Sec. 103) Amends the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to require annual assessments of electronic information freedom in each foreign country.

(Sec. 104) Establishes in the Department of State the Office of Global Internet Freedom (OGIF) to perform various duties, including serving as the focal point for interagency efforts to protect and promote freedom of electronic information abroad and developing and ensuring the implementation of a global strategy and programs to combat state-sponsored and state-directed Internet jamming by authoritarian foreign governments. Authorizes appropriations.

(Sec. 105) Directs the President to annually designate Internet-restricting countries.

Title II: Minimum Corporate Standards for Online Freedom - (Sec. 201) Prohibits U.S. businesses from locating, within a designated Internet-restricting country, any electronic communication that contains any personally identifiable information.

(Sec. 202) Prohibits U.S. businesses that collect or obtain personally identifiable information through the Internet from providing that information to Internet-restricting countries, except for legitimate foreign law enforcement purposes as determined by the Department of Justice. Establishes a private right of action for violations, allowing damages, including punitive damages, without regard to the amount in controversy and without regard to the citizenship of the parties.

(Sec. 203) Requires any U.S. business that creates, provides, or hosts an Internet search engine to provide the OGIF with all terms and parameters used to filter or otherwise affect search results that are implemented because of any direct or indirect communication by any foreign official of an Internet-restricting country or to comply with a policy or practice of restrictions on Internet freedom in an Internet-restricting country.

(Sec. 204) Requires U.S. businesses that maintain an Internet content hosting service to report certain Internet censorship information involving Internet-restricting countries to the OGIF.

(Sec. 205) Prohibits U.S. businesses that maintain Internet content hosting services from jamming of U.S.-supported websites or U.S.-supported content in Internet-restricting countries.

(Sec. 206) Establishes civil and criminal penalties for companies and individuals for violations of various provisions of this Act.

(Sec. 207) Authorizes the President to waive the application of certain provisions of this title regarding a U.S. business or an Internet-restricting country. Directs the President to report waivers to Congress.

Title III: Export Controls for Internet-Restricting Countries - (Sec. 301) Directs the Secretary of Commerce to conduct a feasibility study regarding the development of export controls and export licensing requirements relating to any item subject to regulations commonly known as the Export Administration Regulations to an end user in Internet-restricting countries for the purpose of facilitating substantial restrictions on Internet freedom. Requires a related report to appropriate congressional committees.

Actions Timeline

- **Feb 22, 2008:** Committee on Energy and Commerce discharged.
- **Feb 22, 2008:** Committee on Judiciary discharged.
- **Feb 22, 2008:** Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 320.
- **Feb 8, 2008:** House Committee on Judiciary Granted an extension for further consideration ending not later than Feb. 22, 2008.
- **Feb 1, 2008:** House Committee on Energy and Commerce Granted an extension for further consideration ending not later than Feb. 22, 2008.
- **Feb 1, 2008:** House Committee on Judiciary Granted an extension for further consideration ending not later than Feb. 8, 2008.
- **Jan 16, 2008:** Referred sequentially to the House Committee on the Judiciary for a period ending not later than Feb. 1, 2008 for consideration of such provisions of the bill and amendment as fall within the jurisdiction of that committee pursuant to clause 1(k), rule X.
- **Jan 15, 2008:** House Committee on Energy and Commerce Granted an extension for further consideration ending not later than Feb. 1, 2008.
- **Dec 10, 2007:** Reported (Amended) by the Committee on Foreign Affairs. H. Rept. 110-481, Part I.
- **Dec 10, 2007:** House Committee on Energy and Commerce Granted an extension for further consideration ending not later than Jan. 16, 2008.
- **Oct 23, 2007:** Committee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held.
- **Oct 23, 2007:** Ordered to be Reported in the Nature of a Substitute by Voice Vote.
- **Mar 30, 2007:** Sponsor introductory remarks on measure. (CR E702-703)
- **Feb 2, 2007:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet.
- **Feb 2, 2007:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection.
- **Jan 5, 2007:** Introduced in House
- **Jan 5, 2007:** Referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.