

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 48

To develop and deploy technologies to defeat Internet jamming and
censorship.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 7, 2003

Mr. COX (for himself, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. WELLER, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. SCHIFF) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

A BILL

To develop and deploy technologies to defeat Internet
jamming and censorship.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Global Internet Free-
5 dom Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) Freedom of speech, freedom of the press,
9 and freedom of association are fundamental charac-

1 teristics of a free society. The first amendment to
2 the Constitution of the United States guarantees
3 that “Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the
4 freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of
5 the people peaceably to assemble.” These constitu-
6 tional provisions guarantee the rights of Americans
7 to communicate and associate with one another
8 without restriction, including unfettered communica-
9 tion and association via the Internet. Article 19 of
10 the United Nation’s Universal Declaration of
11 Human Rights explicitly guarantees the freedom to
12 “receive and impart information and ideas through
13 any media and regardless of frontiers”.

14 (2) All people have the right to communicate
15 freely with others, and to have unrestricted access to
16 news and information, on the Internet.

17 (3) With nearly 10 percent of the world’s popu-
18 lation now online, and more gaining access each day,
19 the Internet stands to become the most powerful en-
20 gine for democratization and the free exchange of
21 ideas ever invented.

22 (4) Unrestricted access to news and information
23 on the Internet is a check on repressive rule by au-
24 thoritarian regimes around the world.

1 (5) The governments of Burma, Cuba, Laos,
2 North Korea, the People’s Republic of China, Saudi
3 Arabia, Syria, and Vietnam, among others, are tak-
4 ing active measures to keep their citizens from freely
5 accessing the Internet and obtaining international
6 political, religious, and economic news and informa-
7 tion.

8 (6) Intergovernmental, nongovernmental, and
9 media organizations have reported the widespread
10 and increasing pattern by authoritarian governments
11 to block, jam, and monitor Internet access and con-
12 tent, using technologies such as firewalls, filters, and
13 “black boxes”. Such jamming and monitoring of in-
14 dividual activity on the Internet includes surveillance
15 of e-mail messages, message boards, and the use of
16 particular words; “stealth blocking” individuals from
17 visiting websites; the development of “black lists” of
18 users that seek to visit these websites; and the denial
19 of access to the Internet.

20 (7) The Voice of America and Radio Free Asia,
21 as well as hundreds of news sources with an internet
22 presence, are routinely being jammed by repressive
23 governments.

24 (8) Since the 1940s, the United States has de-
25 ployed anti-jamming technologies to make Voice of

1 America and other United States Government spon-
2 sored broadcasting available to people in nations
3 with governments that seek to block news and infor-
4 mation.

5 (9) The United States Government has thus far
6 commenced only modest steps to fund and deploy
7 technologies to defeat Internet censorship. To date,
8 the Voice of America and Radio Free Asia have
9 committed a total of \$1,000,000 for technology to
10 counter Internet jamming by the People's Republic
11 of China. This technology, which has been successful
12 in attracting 100,000 electronic hits per day from
13 the People's Republic of China, has been relied upon
14 by Voice of America and Radio Free Asia to ensure
15 access to their programming by citizens of the Peo-
16 ple's Republic of China, but United States Govern-
17 ment financial support for the technology has
18 lapsed. In most other countries there is no meaning-
19 ful United States support for Internet freedom.

20 (10) The success of United States policy in sup-
21 port of freedom of speech, press, and association re-
22 quires new initiatives to defeat totalitarian and au-
23 thoritarian controls on news and information over
24 the Internet.

1 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

2 The purposes of this Act are—

3 (1) to adopt an effective and robust global
4 Internet freedom policy;

5 (2) to establish an office within the Inter-
6 national Broadcasting Bureau with the sole mission
7 of countering Internet jamming and blocking by re-
8 pressive regimes;

9 (3) to expedite the development and deployment
10 of technology to protect Internet freedom around the
11 world;

12 (4) to authorize the commitment of a substan-
13 tial portion of United States international broad-
14 casting resources to the continued development and
15 implementation of technologies to counter the jam-
16 ming of the Internet;

17 (5) to utilize the expertise of the private sector
18 in the development and implementation of such tech-
19 nologies, so that the many current technologies used
20 commercially for securing business transactions and
21 providing virtual meeting space can be used to pro-
22 mote democracy and freedom; and

23 (6) to bring to bear the pressure of the free
24 world on repressive governments guilty of Internet
25 censorship and the intimidation and persecution of
26 their citizens who use the Internet.

1 **SEC. 4. DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OF TECH-**
2 **NOLOGIES TO DEFEAT INTERNET JAMMING**
3 **AND CENSORSHIP.**

4 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICE OF GLOBAL INTER-**
5 **NET FREEDOM.**—There is established in the International
6 Broadcasting Bureau the Office of Global Internet Free-
7 dom (hereinafter in this Act referred to as the “Office”).
8 The Office shall be headed by a Director who shall develop
9 and implement a comprehensive global strategy to combat
10 state-sponsored and state-directed Internet jamming, and
11 persecution of those who use the Internet.

12 (b) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There
13 are authorized to be appropriated to the Office
14 \$50,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2003 and 2004.

15 (c) **COOPERATION OF OTHER FEDERAL DEPART-**
16 **MENTS AND AGENCIES.**—Each department and agency of
17 the United States Government shall cooperate fully with,
18 and assist in the implementation of, the strategy developed
19 by the Office and shall make such resources and informa-
20 tion available to the Office as is necessary to the achieve-
21 ment of the purposes of this Act.

22 (d) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—On March 1 following
23 the date of the enactment of this Act and annually there-
24 after, the Director of the Office shall submit to the Con-
25 gress a report on the status of state interference with
26 Internet use and of efforts by the United States to counter

1 such interference. Each report shall list the countries that
2 pursue policies of Internet censorship, blocking, and other
3 abuses; provide information concerning the government
4 agencies or quasi-governmental organizations that imple-
5 ment Internet censorship; and describe with the greatest
6 particularity practicable the technological means by which
7 such blocking and other abuses are accomplished. In the
8 discretion of the Director, such report may be submitted
9 in both a classified and nonclassified version.

10 (e) LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this
11 Act shall be interpreted to authorize any action by the
12 United States to interfere with foreign national censorship
13 in furtherance of legitimate law enforcement aims that is
14 consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human
15 Rights.

16 **SEC. 5. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

17 It is the sense of the Congress that the United States
18 should—

19 (1) publicly, prominently, and consistently de-
20 nounce governments that restrict, censor, ban, and
21 block access to information on the Internet;

22 (2) direct the United States Representative to
23 the United Nations to submit a resolution at the
24 next annual meeting of the United Nations Human
25 Rights Commission condemning all governments

1 that practice Internet censorship and deny freedom
2 to access and share information; and
3 (3) deploy, at the earliest practicable date, tech-
4 nologies aimed at defeating state-directed Internet
5 censorship and the persecution of those who use the
6 Internet.

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