

Help Stop SOPA/PIPA

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You are an agent of change. Has anyone ever told you that? Well, I just did, and I meant it.

Normally we stay away from politics here at the official WordPress project — having users from all over the globe that span the political spectrum is evidence that we are doing our job and democratizing publishing, and we don't want to alienate any of our users no matter how much some of us may disagree with some of them personally. Today, I'm breaking our no-politics rule, because [there's something going on](#) in U.S. politics right now that we need to make sure you know about and understand, because it affects us all.

Using WordPress to blog, to publish, to communicate things online that once upon a time would have been relegated to an unread private journal (or simply remained unspoken, uncreated, unshared) makes **you** a part of one of the biggest changes in modern history: the democratization of publishing and the independent web. Every time you click Publish, you are a part of that change, whether you are posting canny political insight or a cat that makes you LOL. How would you feel if the web stopped being so free and independent? I'm ~~concerned~~ freaked right the heck out about the bills that threaten to do this, and as a participant in one of the biggest changes in modern history, you should be, too.

You may have heard people talking/blogging/twittering about SOPA — the Stop Online Piracy Act. The recent [SOPA-related boycott of GoDaddy](#) was all over the news, with many people expressing their outrage over the possibilities of SOPA, but when I ask people about SOPA and its sister bill in the Senate, PIPA (Protect IP Act), many don't really know what the bills propose, or what we stand to lose. If you are not freaked out by SOPA/PIPA, please: for the next four minutes, instead of checking Facebook statuses, seeing who mentioned you on Twitter, or watching the latest episode of Sherlock*, watch this video.

Some thoughts:

- In the U.S. our legal system maintains that the burden of proof is on the accuser, and that people are innocent until proven guilty. This tenet seems to be on the chopping block when it comes to the web if these bills pass, as companies could shut down sites based on accusation alone.
- Laws are not like lines of PHP; they are not easily reverted if someone wakes up and realizes there is a better way to do things. We should not be so quick to codify something this far-reaching.
- The people writing these laws are not the people writing the independent web, and they are not out to protect it. We have to stand up for it ourselves.

Blogging is a form of activism. You can be an agent of change. Some people will tell you that taking action is useless, that online petitions, phone calls to representatives, and other actions won't change a single mind, especially one that's been convinced of something by lobbyist dollars. To those people, I repeat the words of Margaret Mead:

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

We are not a small group. More than 60 million people use WordPress — it's said to power [about 15% of the web](#). We can make an impact, and you can be an agent of change. Go to [Stop American Censorship](#) for more information and a bunch of ways you can take action quickly, easily, and painlessly. The Senate votes in two weeks, and we need to help at least 41 more senators see reason before then. Please. [Make your voice heard](#).

**Yes, the latest episode of Sherlock is good. Stephen Moffatt + Russell Tovey = always good*