

Giving Thanks -- To PIPA and SOPA Skeptics

by [David Sohn](#) [1]

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Thanksgiving is a good time to step back and give a special word of thanks to the Members of Congress who, refusing to be steamrolled by a major lobbying effort, are asking serious questions about the collateral damage risks of proposed anti-piracy legislation. It's not an easy stand to take: Fighting online infringement is obviously a valid goal and there is surely lots of pressure to just go along with the proposals currently on the table. But it's a principled stand, because the impact of overreaching legislation in this area would go far beyond piracy. The [implications](#) [2] for online innovation, free expression, user privacy, and cybersecurity simply can't be ignored.

The following Members of Congress deserve a special Thanksgiving thank you, not just from CDT but from Internet users everywhere, for refusing to allow questions about collateral damage to be [swept under the rug](#) [3] in the rush to enact intellectual property enforcement legislation:

Senator [Ron Wyden](#) [4] and Representative [Zoe Lofgren](#) [5] have been leaders on this issue from the beginning.

Senators [Maria Cantwell](#) [6], [Jerry Moran](#) [7], and [Rand Paul](#) [8] have joined Wyden in placing a "hold" on the Senate bill.

Representative [Darrell Issa](#) [9] has stated publicly that he opposes SOPA in its current form and intends to propose an alternative.

Representatives [Anna Eshoo](#) [10], [Jared Polis](#) [11], [Ron Paul](#) [12], [Mike Doyle](#) [13], [Lloyd Doggett](#) [14], [Doris Matsui](#) [15], [Mike Thompson](#) [16], [Mike Honda](#) [17], and [George Miller](#) [18] joined Lofgren in a letter expressing major concerns with SOPA.

House Minority Leader [Nancy Pelosi](#) [19] has stated that Congress needs to find a better approach than SOPA.

Representative [Michele Bachmann](#) [20] reportedly has expressed concerns about SOPA.

Representative [Dan Lungren](#) [21] highlighted important questions about cybersecurity side effects at the House Judiciary Committee hearing last week.

Representatives [Sheila Jackson-Lee](#) [22], [Maxine Waters](#) [23], [Steve Cohen](#) [24], and [Hank Johnson](#) [25] all made comments about important areas of concern during the SOPA hearing last week.

I may well be leaving someone out, as I prepare to head out the door for Thanksgiving. But these legislators deserve a great deal of credit for looking beyond simplistic slogans and asking important questions about how these bills would work in practice and who might be affected besides true "pirates." Internet users should be grateful -- and we can all hope that more legislators will start asking similar questions in the months ahead.

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- [SOPA](#)
- [PIPA/PROTECT IP](#)
- [Digital Copyright](#)



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