

Congress Puts SOPA and PIPA on Hold

January 23, 2012 by [Jenevieve Maerker](#)

In the wake of last week's [web protests and media attention](#) around pending anti-piracy legislation, leaders in both houses of Congress announced on Friday that they would indefinitely postpone further consideration of the Stop Online Piracy Act ("SOPA") and the PROTECT IP Act ("PIPA"). Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) [cancelled](#) the cloture "test" vote to reopen debate on PIPA that had been scheduled for tomorrow, January 24, citing "legitimate issues raised by many" while expressing optimism "that we can reach a compromise in the coming weeks." In response, SOPA sponsor Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX) [announced](#) that the House Judiciary Committee would postpone consideration of SOPA, which it had intended to take up in February, "until there is wider agreement on a solution." Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT), lead sponsor of PIPA, [expressed disappointment](#) at the delay of the Senate vote, calling it a "knee-jerk reaction" and reaffirming his commitment to see a version of the bill passed this year.

The stalling of SOPA and PIPA may make room for alternative anti-piracy legislation being advanced by Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA) and Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR). Dubbed the Online Protection and Enforcement of Digital Trade ("[OPEN](#)") Act, the Issa/Wyden proposal omits some of the more controversial measures of SOPA and PIPA and concentrates enforcement powers in the International Trade Commission. Sen. Wyden [introduced](#) the OPEN Act as S. 2029 on December 17, 2011, and Rep. Issa officially [introduced](#) it as H.R. 3782 on January 18, during last Wednesday's web blackout protests.

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