

YAHOO! NEWS

As Wikipedia goes dark to protest SOPA, media offer support



By [Dylan Stableford, Yahoo! News | The Cutline](#) – Wed, Jan 18, 2012

Wikipedia and several other websites went dark for 24 hours on Wednesday to protest proposed U.S. legislation--the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) and the related PROTECTIP Act (PIPA)--they argue would effectively censor the free and open Internet.

Visitors to [U.S. Wikipedia pages](#) are being redirected to a page that explains the blackout, and invites users to contact their congressional representatives:

For over a decade, we have spent millions of hours building the largest encyclopedia in human history. Right now, the U.S. Congress is considering legislation that could fatally damage the free and open Internet. For 24 hours, to raise awareness, we are blacking out Wikipedia.

While the vast majority of Wikipedia is blacked out online, the [SOPA](#) and [PIPA](#) pages were not. And Wikipedia is [still accessible via mobile devices](#).

Like-minded sites including [Craigslist](#), [Tumblr](#), [Reddit](#), [Mozilla](#) and [WordPress](#) joined [Wikipedia with similar protest landing pages](#) if they did not go dark entirely. The Huffington Post blacked out the image of its top story on Wednesday. Even [ICanHasCheeseburger.com](#) joined in the protest.



Wales (AP)

Google, which has been previously criticized for not speaking out on SOPA, is using its [Google Doodle](#) to send people to an online petition. [Wired.com](#) redacted its homepage like a classified memo:

But not everyone in the media world is happy about the blackout. Rupert Murdoch has been perhaps the most vocal critic, using his Twitter account to slam opponents of the legislation.

"Nonsense argument about danger to Internet," Murdoch [wrote](#). "How about Google, others blocking porn, hate speech, etc.? Internet hurt?"

On Monday, Twitter chief Dick Costolo [called](#) Wikipedia co-founder Jimmy Wales' decision "silly."

"Closing a global business in reaction to single-issue national politics is foolish," Costolo wrote on Twitter. (He later apologized to Wales via Twitter, saying he was referring to the idea of Twitter going dark.)

Meanwhile, the Washington Post, NPR and the Guardian launched a temporary, Twitter-based alternative to Wikipedia.

"Ask a question on Twitter with the hashtag #altwiki, and we'll ask our readers to help provide an answer," WaPo's David Beard [wrote](#)



[in a blog post](#) introducing the project.

"SOPA and PIPA are just indicators of a much broader problem," Wikipedia executive director Sue Gardner [wrote in a message to "Wikipedians"](#) on the eve of the blackout. "All around the world, we're seeing the development of legislation intended to fight online piracy, and regulate the Internet in other ways, that hurt online freedoms. Our concern extends beyond SOPA and PIPA: they are just part of the problem. We want the Internet to remain free and open, everywhere, for everyone."

Other popular Yahoo! News stories:

- [Lunch with Piers Morgan, who hopes to be more like Bill O'Reilly this year](#)
- [Ron Paul continues assault on the media](#)
- [Tim Tebow sets Twitter, TV records](#)

Copyright 2012 The Cutline

Copyright © 2013 Yahoo! Inc. All rights reserved. | Yahoo! - ABC News Network | /