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Freedom has served the Internet well. The Net continues to expand and offer new opportunities, with little government interference. It's served as a way to connect people who want to engage in political act or connect and share common interests.

Naturally, that's seen as a threat, not only in countries such as North Korea and Iran, but also in Congress. As my colleague Ashley Bethard [wrote recently](#) [2], three U.S. senators leading the charge to give the president an "Internet kill switch," are back with a new version of the bill. The trio — Joe Lieberman, Susan Collins and Thomas Carper — have figured out that shutting down or censoring the Internet is a hard sell, considering Mubarak's efforts to cut off Internet access in Egypt. So their measure, S. 413, which would let the president declare a "national cyber emergency" to protect "critical infrastructure," is called the "Internet Freedom Act."

Because when the president tells ISPs what to do, he's defending freedom!

A [press release](#) [3] from the trio explains points out that the new version explicitly says that

""neither the President, the Director of the National Center for Cybersecurity and Communications nor any officer or employee of the United States Government shall have the authority to shut down the Internet."

Lieberman offered a different explanation, though, in this [CNN interview](#) [4], where he explained that the U.S. needs to follow China's example so that the U.S. government "can disconnect parts of its Internet in a case of war." The president is "not going to do it every day," Lieberman explained.

At the Cato Institute, Jim Harper [points out](#) [5] that no one has explained yet why the government needs these new powers.

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