

CONGRESSWOMAN

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## *Global Internet Freedom Act of 2024*

### Background:

Internet freedom is an important component of human rights, including the freedoms of expression and of peaceful assembly. As the U.S. Department of State has affirmed, "Intrinsic to the concept of Internet freedom is recognition that human rights and fundamental freedoms must be protected both online and offline."

However, global internet freedom [declined](#) for the 13th consecutive year in 2023, with several countries - including Iran, China, Myanmar, Belarus, and Nicaragua - shutting down internet services, blocking websites and applications, and engaging in other forms of digital repression. Moreover, [advancements in artificial intelligence](#) are intensifying global harms to internet freedom, including by providing new tools for governments to censor online content.

### Bill Summary:

The bipartisan *Global Internet Freedom Act*, led by Congresswoman Sara Jacobs and Congresswoman Maria Salazar, would require that the U.S. Department of State's annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices include abuses of internet freedom across countries and regions. This reporting will in turn support the United States' efforts to promote human rights as technology emerges and evolves.

Specifically, the *Global Internet Freedom Act* would update the *Foreign Assistance Act of 1961* to:

- Include internet freedom as a reporting requirement in Country Reports on Human Rights Practices
- Outline internet freedom abuses, including barriers to internet access, undue restrictions on online expression, and undue violations of privacy online