



[pirateparty.org.au](http://pirateparty.org.au)

PO Box Q1715 Queen Victoria  
Building NSW 1230

Fax: +61 2 8088 1346

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For Immediate Release**

## **Delayed, not dead.**

"The move to postpone mandatory Internet censorship legislation by the Labor government is testament to the unpopularity of the legislation.<sup>1</sup> However it in no way represents a victory for the Open Internet campaign with Senator Conroy's spokesperson maintaining that the government remains steadfast in their goal to push through legislation that will create a state sponsored Internet censorship infrastructure" said Party Secretary, Rodney Serkowski.

He continued "This delay is a cynical move to minimise the effect that this terrible, misguided and ill-conceived policy will have in the polls. We plan to continue to raise awareness, and remind voters of the intent of the Labor government to pursue this policy. Politicians must understand that attempting to implement a censorship infrastructure of the nature proposed in a liberal democracy, is electoral poison."

The lobby for such legislation comes from various places. In Australia the focus has been most prominent on the Australian Christian Lobby, who clearly in no way represent the majority of Christian Australians<sup>2</sup> but have been the most vocal in support for the Internet censorship regime, citing people like the former Greens candidate Dr. Clive Hamilton and The Australia Insititute as justification for the proposals.<sup>3</sup>

Christian Engstrom, one of the Swedish Piratpartiet Members of the European Parliament, has also provided insight into where other pressures for censorship infrastructure comes from. He cites Johan Schlüter from the Danish Anti-Piracy Group, who conducts domestic lobbying for groups like the IFPI and whose strategy it is to use the very serious issue of child abuse material as means to lobby for the implementation of filtering technologies as a precedent to protect their own dwindling business models.<sup>4</sup> This is despite the indisputable evidence that current technologies are easily circumvented, and do nothing but simply block the problem of child sex abuse material, effectively diverting funds that would be better spent actually combatting the problem.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/australian-it/rudd-retreats-on-passing-web-filter-legislation/story-e6frgax-1225859630452>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.somebodythinkofthechildren.com/a-letter-against-filtering-from-a-concerned-christian-mother/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.tai.org.au/file.php?file=media\\_releases/MR141.pdf](https://www.tai.org.au/file.php?file=media_releases/MR141.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://christianengstrom.wordpress.com/2010/04/27/ifpis-child-porn-strategy/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://cleaninternet.com/>

What is concerning however, is that the DBCDE have considered making the promotion of circumvention somehow illegal.<sup>6</sup> This begins to make analogies of Iranian and Chinese type censorship much more realistic, and concerns about the effects on freedom of expression much more pertinent. If circumvention will not be illegal, then how can it be illegal to simply tell people how to circumvent the government controlled infrastructure in order to secure access to information that the Australian government may deem inappropriate, effectively silencing political debate?<sup>7</sup>

Party President, David Crafti, said "perhaps Senator Conroy believes that the proposed filter is not so bad, because what MPs themselves are subjected to is far worse. Their own administration overblocks so outrageousl that Senator Conroy might feel that if even Senators cannot be trusted with unfettered access to content, then nobody should."

Liberal Senator Cory Bernardi has said "We have a web filter in the senate that stopped me visiting some sites which had actually written about me. One was an online newspaper for the gay community and another a political party site." Like many others, he wants to "see less garbage available on the Internet," but unlike many elected representatives, recognises that it is "a parental responsibility."

It seems to us that the other parties are trying to avoid having a clear position on the issue in a misguided attempt to appease the fringes of the Christian right and the old media, while voters, especially the tech savvy, are looking for a Party that will really oppose the filter. In the age of information, it is essential that there is an information party. These are issues which are at the heart of the Pirate movement, and why the Pirate Party was formed. These are the types of issues that really gets at the heart of why the Pirate Party was formed. We believe that free access to information and the right to free expression are basic human rights.

### **About Pirate Party Australia**

The Pirate Party Australia is a forming political party, currently seeking membership for the purposes of registration with the Australian Electoral Commission and intends to contest the next Australian federal election if successful.

Pirate Party Australia has an interest in reforming legislation and policy surrounding culture, innovation and the protection of civil liberties, with sister organisations fully registered, seeking registration or otherwise active in over 30 countries throughout the world.

The Swedish Piratpartiet have two elected sitting Members of the European Parliament, after the 2009 European Elections, in which they attained 7.1% of the vote.

### **For further comment please contact:**

**David Crafti, President, Pirate Party Australia**

[davidcrafti@pirateparty.org.au](mailto:davidcrafti@pirateparty.org.au)

+61 415 548 108

**Rodney Serkowski, Party Secretary, Pirate Party Australia**

[rodneyserkowski@pirateparty.org.au](mailto:rodneyserkowski@pirateparty.org.au)

+61 409 159 904

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<sup>6</sup> <http://delimiter.com.au/2010/04/29/dbcde-forum-reveals-filter-legislation-not-drafted/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.networkworld.com/news/2010/040610-pirate-party-and-phil-nitschke.html>