

Help the Iranian protesters get information out!

While the recent election in Iran was almost certainly a fraud, what is entirely certain is their government's reaction to the protests. Within days of the election, even token free speech was all but eliminated. Iran has gone dark; information coming out of the country has slowed to a trickle. Within the country, all internet traffic is heavily monitored. Access to social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook, crucial tools for protesters to communicate, has been banned.

But you can help.

If you have a broadband internet connection, you can provide secure and anonymous communication for protesters in Iran through a program called **Tor**. For the technically minded, Tor uses a portion of your connection to set up an encrypted proxy server that bounces the requested data between other computers running the same program. If that doesn't mean anything to you, that's OK. In laymen terms, it keeps any government or corporation from looking at what you are sending or who it's being sent to. Using email or Facebook simply looks like a scrambled request to a random person on the internet. The only way this can be effectively stopped is to cut off the entire internet, which would devastate a nations economy.

Tor is easy to install. Simply go to the website <https://www.torproject.org/> and follow the directions in the middle of the page to become a relay. It should usually take around twenty minutes to download and install. Because you are not opening any of the information you are transferring, there is no risk to your computer. You can vary the amount of bandwidth donated, and the program can be turned off if you need full speed. It's a small program, so it won't slow down your computer. You can also use the Tor network yourself if you need anonymity.

This program has been used across the world by journalists, human rights workers, citizens from other repressive regimes, and even employees of our own government. It is a proven way to break countrywide firewalls and guarantee free speech despite the efforts of any single nation, but right now, it needs more volunteers. It is slow, and this recent mass censorship has stressed the system. By contributing your connection to the cause, you make the Tor network faster, safer, and stronger.

Make free speech truly inalienable. Donate bandwidth, become a Tor relay.

For more information on helping Iran, visit <http://iran.whyweprotest.net/>

If you have any questions, send an e-mail to wilmington.freeweb@gmail.com for more details.

Note: While most home networks are able to run this program with no problems, computers behind an outside router (for example, on-campus housing, apartment complexes) often experience problems. For those on UNCW campus, there is currently no way to set yourself up as proxy.