

Letter in Support of Roman Storm and Software Developers

Writing code is not a crime. Publishing open-source software is lawful activity. And protecting privacy is a fundamental right.

For years, Blockchain Association has stood publicly and unequivocally in defense of software developers. We have warned – repeatedly – that efforts to criminalize neutral infrastructure and punish builders for how others use their software pose a direct threat to innovation, civil liberties, and the rule of law.

The prosecution – and possible retrial – of Roman Storm brings that threat into stark focus.

This case advances a theory that should alarm anyone who values free expression: that writing and publishing non-custodial, open-source code can itself give rise to criminal liability, not because the code is unlawful, but because of how third parties may choose to use it. That theory is incompatible with long-established constitutional protections and dangerously misinterprets how open-source technology is built and used.

Privacy-preserving technologies are not shadows at the margins of society. They are essential infrastructure. They protect journalists reporting under threat, activists resisting repression, businesses safeguarding sensitive data, and everyday Americans exercising their right to privacy in a digital world.

To equate privacy tools with criminality is to erode a foundational freedom.

The United States leads the world in innovation precisely because it protects speech – including the expressive act of writing code. If developers can be prosecuted simply for publishing software, then no builder is safe, no open-source project is secure, and no innovation is free from fear.

Roman Storm's case is not just about one individual. It is about whether America will continue to uphold the principle that code is speech and that developers should not be punished for building lawful tools.

The future of open software depends on it.



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