

I operate a woodwork, and furniture studio designing and building custom pieces for clients. Nearly all of my clients find me through my website, and those that don't view it to validate my work. If the current net neutrality rules were repealed, I will be unable to afford priority access, and will in all probability be forced out of business. I also use the Internet to conduct research for an educational program. Without the current net neutrality rules, it would probably have not been possible. The Internet allows me to connect with museums and their staff, and arrange in-person visits to examine the furniture for myself. As a matter of fact, this project has its origins through an electronic newsletter. Had the publisher been forced to pay to gain visibility, I might never have learned about it.

What I expect from my Internet Service Provider (ISP) is fast reliable access to all the Internet offers. While my ISP provides an e-mail address, it's use is deprecated in favor of other offerings provided by other, more competent entities. The Internet provides multiple services for me, including file storage, educational videos/resources, access to banking/investing. It's most important utility, however, is as a communications conduit. My family uses it to hold weekly audio/video conversations, for instance. Professionally, I communicate with overseas colleagues.

One popular refrain used by those wishing to repeal the current net neutrality rules is that if your ISP is discriminating, you can always choose another. I can state absolutely, that this is not possible where I live! While I was President of my condominium association, we solicited bids for broadband service and basic cable TV when our previous contract expired. Although at least three companies serve the city, only the incumbent submitted a bid. The incumbents' bid was outrageously expensive with unreasonable terms! Broadband providers are de facto monopolies! Through discussions with friends and colleagues, I learned that this situation is not unique. Government agency oversight is definitely required in the broadband/cable marketplace to ensure reasonable behavior, and municipalities must be allowed to enter/participate in the broadband marketplace.

Finally, the FCC needs to become more involved in the regulation of ISPs. Recent examples supporting this assertion include:

- the AT&T bill "cramming" behavior where fraudulent charges appeared on my mobile phone bill despite regular conversations with company representatives alerting them to this fact,
- continued harassment by Comcast admonishing me for not upgrading my equipment despite the fact it's working fine, and causing no issues with their network (we own, not rent, the modem),
- multiple documented cases of poor, abusive customer service by Comcast in the press,
- excessive pricing; my bill for broadband service only significantly increases year-over-year with no difference in level-of-service (did I mention that broadband providers are a virtual monopoly?), and
- service pricing is arbitrary as company offers new subscribers better prices, and agents routinely discount prices on existing services for customers who threaten to leave (also well documented in the press).

The current President's plan to transform government through IT modernization also points to the need for FCC oversight of broadband. If more services are only accessible through on-line portals, then those without access to broadband Internet are effectively disenfranchised, prohibited from accessing government services.

The repeal of the current net neutrality rules would create significant economic harm, and disruption to my business, and personal life. These regulations should be strengthened to further the communications goals of this nation.