



July 13, 2017

Chairman Ajit Pai
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Restoring Internet Freedom (WC Docket No. 17-108)

Dear Chairman Pai:

On behalf of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), which represents 129,000 family physicians and medical students across the country, I am writing to you to express our concern about the potential for untended consequences of restricted or gated flow of health information technology as a result of the Federal Communications Commission's [proposed rule](#) titled, "Restoring Internet Freedom" as published in the June 2, 2017 *Federal Register*.

We share the desire and goal of a free and open Internet. The Internet forms the backbone on which the health care industry is building capabilities for health information exchange. Lack of health information exchange is literally life-threatening. It is paramount for the health and well-being of U.S. citizens that no barriers be placed hindering the free and open appropriate exchange of health information.

The FCC must ensure that internet service providers do not place fees or constraints on health information exchange above and beyond the usual and customary fees to access the Internet. Our members in rural areas do not have multiple companies providing broadband access to the Internet and therefore are at the mercy of those local monopolies to provide them enough bandwidth to be able to adequately exchange health information. The FCC's light touch approach to Internet regulations must provide adequate protections to the physicians and the patients they serve in these rural (and other locales) where a single telecommunication company has a real monopoly, or functional monopoly.

Please continue to protect the access of affordable broadband for family physicians and medical students and the millions of patients they serve. Should you have questions, please contact Dr. Steven Waldren, Director of the Alliance for eHealth Innovation, at 913-906-6000 ext. 4100 or swaldren@aafp.org.

Sincerely,

Wanda D. Filer, MD, MBA, FFAFP
Board Chair

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