Dear Commissioners,

I am not a bot, paid commenter, lobbyist, or political operative. I am not interested in personal attacks or “mean tweets”. I am a business owner, technical professional, stockholder and consumer, and like the majority of Americans, I am interested in ensuring we have access to a free and open Internet. And I believe the best way to guarantee a free and open Internet is by maintaining the FCC’s existing Net Neutrality rules and maintaining the classification of broadband providers as common carriers under Title II of the Communications Act.

Chairman Pai’s Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeking to reverse this classification makes the argument that the regulatory framework used during the Internet’s infancy remains the most appropriate regulatory framework for the needs of today. From both a technical and business standpoint, the Internet today is vastly different than the Internet of past decades. While the late 1990s and early 2000s saw an explosion of companies providing connectivity to consumers across the country, the trend today is towards consolidation. In addition, today’s service providers are increasingly becoming content providers themselves, something that was rarely seen in the past. The largest home Internet service provider in the United States is now also the world’s largest broadcasting and cable television company by revenue. The largest U.S. [wireless communications](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_wireless_communications_service_providers) service provider now controls some of the Internet’s most well-known brands, including AOL, Yahoo!, Flickr, Engadget, and the Huffington Post. And by the end of the year, the world’s largest telecommunications company could own the largest pay TV system in the country, the nation’s second largest wireless network, and a $100 billion content business consisting of dozens of cable and broadcast networks and the rights to hundreds of feature films.

Chariman Pai’s proposals ignore the realities of the modern broadband market and threaten to give a handful of powerful companies control over both the content consumers are interested in as well as the means to access such content. Absent the “bright-line” rules against paid prioritization, blocking, and throttling, the Internet of tomorrow may look a lot like the studio system of Hollywood during the early 20th century. Companies like Comcast, Verizon, and AT&T will be in a position to decide every aspect of how consumers access content, from which services consumers can use to the price they pay. Competition and innovation will be stifled; if I run a tech blog in competition with Engadget, what incentive does Verizon have to deliver my content to their customers at the same level of service as its own property? What incentive does AT&T or Comcast have in providing equal service to Netflix or Amazon Instant Video when they stand to profit from driving consumers to their own services?

Chairman Pai has previously said that net neutrality protections are not necessary because consumers can simply switch service providers if they are unhappy. Yet the FCC’s own data show that this is simply not the case. Millions of Americans, even many in major metropolitan areas, have only a single choice for Internet access. Even those that are fortunate enough to have two choices may not have two equal options; a consumer unhappy with the actions of their cable company may only have a slower, data limited DSL provider as an alternative. There is simply not enough of a free market in place for natural competition to guarantee free and open access to the Internet.

For these reasons, it is essential that the FCC maintain the current net neutrality rules as well as the Title II classification. In an era where service providers are bundling more and expanded services together, it is crucial to ensure consumers are free to purchase an unobstructed, high-speed link to the Internet so that they may use the content and services they desire. I urge the commission to reject the NPRM and maintain the existing net neutrality regulations and Title II classification.

Thank you,

Robert Grimmick