Re: 17-108 proposal to reverse net neutrality

To Whom It May Concern:

I *strongly* oppose the idea of reversing net neutrality rules. Although the putative purpose of reversal is to enhance competition - something that on its face should be good for consumers - the reality is likely to lead to decisions made by the few for the many without their input or even knowledge. Internet service providers may claim that they will only seek to improve their overall offerings and will not discriminate against particular types of content, but watering down net neutrality opens the door for exactly that sort of behavior. The internet was originally supposed to be a democratizing force for the benefit of everyone in society. The reality so far has only partially lived up to the hype. As the scholar Robert Gordon has pointed out, productivity gains due to technological improvements have lagged those from previous industrial revolutions, meaning that the economic benefits of the internet have been more concentrated. Additionally, the large tech companies involved have grown large enough to influence both commercial and consumer behavior via their large cash stockpiles and vast troves of information. Most insidiously, though, the internet has preyed upon our natural cognitive biases, encouraging tribalism. Reversing net neutrality would exacerbate all of this by further diluting the democratic principles supposedly inherent in the original concept of the internet. Please leave bias up to individuals, not corporations and politicians: do not reverse net neutrality.

Sincerely,

Julie Schultz