I am writing this comment to express my opinion on and hope for continued net neutrality and options for Internet privacy. Few Americans have a choice of ISPs for high-speed broadband services. This situation causes each of us to rely on the “good intentions” of those singular companies providing broadband. There is a realistic fear that the providers will not act in the interest of a broadly understood consumer need for access to broadband, but rather that they will prioritize profits by offering different levels of service that directly effect the ability of each and every citizen to have equal access to the internet. ISPs could also gain the comprehensive capacity to collect data on their consumers through monitoring their habits on individual use of the Internet without requesting permission.

Proposed changes in the rules regarding net neutrality create a situation in which individuals have to rely on ISPs corporate goodness. This means that citizens must trust that corporations will consider an individual’s concerns on equal access to the Internet with their own focus on corporate profits. The result is an unbalanced situation in which the powerful moneyed corporate citizen (ISP) has control of how the Internet is accessed and what direction customer searches are directed. This would allow corporations to give preference to ISP profits rather than toward the individual’s desire to obtain information.

Addition changes affect the confidential nature of consumers’ Internet use. Privacy rules must be in place to support the protection of individual citizens’ privacy. All ISPs should have to inform customers what information is being collected on them, and how that information is used or shared with other companies. They must be required to keep their customers informed and should also provide guidance on how a customer could opt into and opt out of this process.

Ever since the “Fairness Doctrine” was repealed in 1987, information provided to the American people has become less balanced. The balance of information presented and the passive access to opposing opinions is imperative if citizens are to make informed decisions based on opposing viewpoints. The proposed changes in how ISPs provide Internet service (open fair access verses “fast lanes”) and how ISPs addresses the information they have (regarding consumers use the internet) are of great concern to me. My belief is that the majority of citizens would opt for an open Internet and control of their individual privacy if they were provided with balanced information through passive access to opposing points of view. Through this, individuals are allowed to determine their own opinions based on facts. Please insure the same mistakes as were made in 1987 are not repeated in 2017. Maintain the rules that were to have gone into practice earlier this year and were based on insuring net neutrality. Americans depend on protecting their privacy and on open communication protocols that allow us to connect online without having to ask permission from or follow the self-driven policies of any company.