

Why you should keep net neutrality

By: Bradley Berndt



November 25, 2017

Dear Ajit V. Pai,

I am writing to share my concerns about an issue that affects me, my family, my school, and all users of the internet. When your idea to remove net neutrality laws in April got out, there was an organized day, July 12, where people all over the internet got together and defended net neutrality laws. There were over five million emails to congress, two million plus F.C.C. comments, and one hundred and twenty thousand calls to congress. On November 21, 2017, you stated that there would be a vote inside of the F.C.C. that would discuss the fate of net neutrality. Doing this has a few good outcomes, but the negatives out-weigh the positives. One thing that might benefit the communication corporations is that by receiving MORE money, they can in turn create better products. However, if you remove net neutrality, the corporations that run on the internet and receive most of their income from the internet, might have trouble staying up and running, because they are paying for their product’s production, advertisements, and their website to be on the internet. You might say that the communication corporations are going through the same thing, and you are correct. The difference is that the F.C.C. will be holding their hand through this by removing net neutrality. They will have more money, and they won’t have to pay for their website to be on their network.

This won’t affect only the people that run businesses on the internet, but also the people learning from the internet, specifically schools. By getting rid of net neutrality, schools will be heavily affected. In most districts of schools, there are high budget schools, and low budget schools. High budget schools might not be as affected by the removal of net neutrality, but low budget schools will. The low budget schools will have to either sacrifice upgrades to the school, so they can connect to website that they need to access to teach, or ditch the internet as a whole. This wouldn’t change the lives of school children ten years ago, but it will change school today, as technology is being implemented more and more in today’s classroom. This doesn’t just affect children, but also college students who must attend college online. (For one reason or another, doesn’t matter) Let’s say the CEO of Time Warner Cable tried to get into Michigan State as a high-school grad. If they didn’t accept him, he wouldn’t like that, nobody would, and he would have a grudge against Michigan State. If you remove net neutrality, he could deny access to anyone who goes there just because of his experience.

A statement I would like to bring up is that we use the internet in more ways than you think. If you go without internet for a day, you can tell that we depend on it a lot. Other ways to access internet, (Google home, Amazon Alexa, etc.) will also be affected. If comcast has a bias against, Disney, for example a child who loves Disney on tv would like to watch and play games on Disney’s website. Uh-oh! They can’t because laws in place allow comcast to discriminate against Disney because they don’t like it. Music? Internet. Downloads? Internet. We use the internet in so many ways, and yet we don’t even recognize it. I used the internet to write this paper, proving that to make a difference, we must use the internet. (Unless you are boycotting the internet.)

E-sports is a rising trend, particularly with the Overwatch League, a league of gamers that compete across the globe, a league that I particularly enjoy. For that to happen, there had to be a game in the first place, and with the net neutrality laws currently in place, that could happen. They can regularly update and upgrade the game. Without net neutrality they might not get the ability to upgrade and make the game better. The game is not what it was 1 and ½ years ago, it has changed. Currently the game has 35 million players, something that could never had have been possible with full internet neutrality. What if someone at AT&T lost at it one day and got it blocked for AT&T Users. Nobody would care for AT&T at all.

Now there are some “Pros” that have been brought up. One of them being that it would limit access so that children don’t come across pornography, hate content, or just things in general that are adults only. This is blaspheme, as there are other ways to prevent this from being seen other than changing the entire system. Tools such as Disney Circle, and other network monitors automatically censor hate content and other 18+ things.

Revoking net neutrality would cause people to commit more crimes. They would commit piracy, and hack the paywalls to watch videos on YouTube that they would normally watch now. There’s one thing that we want less in the United States, and that’s less crime. If we introduce these laws, there would be more people who would commit these crimes.

The last thing I would like to bring up what good would come out of this? The big and rich companies get bigger and richer and the poorer get poorer? They can control our internet, filtering out things they disagree with, making our minds think like theirs. If they filter what we see, we would be a dystopian movie plot. Just kidding, but it would be similar. If someone gets hired as the new chairman of the F.C.C. and attempts to bring net neutrality back, the big companies could just filter the information, making the politician look bad, and making the companies look better. They might even prevent them from seeing that information at all. This change may be irreversible is my point.

I may be just an average 11-year-old nerd, but if there’s one thing I have learned from the internet that one person can make a difference, but I am not one person. There are millions of people who will more than likely agree with me and there are people who will hate having net neutrality revoked. I ask of you to think this over multiple times, as passing this would cause the internet, and the entire world, to most likely change.

Best Regards,

Bradley Berndt