No traffic should be favored over other traffic on the information super-highway, as we optimistically called the internet in its early days. The rules of the road must be the same for all traffic traveling upon it. If you allow different speed limits for traffic traveling on the same road according to what the travelers pay you are, in essence, handing the road over to those travelers who can pay to go fastest. Perhaps this is the “freedom” you are referring to, but it won’t be freedom for anyone else. In the end, it won’t even be freedom for the fastest travelers. They will have a captive market, yes – because they will always get to market first and be able to knock other travelers off the road. But mark the tale of the Golden Goose. She may not keep on laying those golden eggs after she is completely penned in, no matter how you decorate the space, no matter how much you swear you are doing for her. The wide open spaces of the information super-highway gave her the feeling of freedom, one not so much available in the “real world” anymore. It was little enough to leave her. You could afford to. She was laying golden eggs for everyone. You could, really, have just left her alone. She was the intended beneficiary of the information super-highway -- it was there for her to explore, in the beginning anyway, and along away she’d drop her golden eggs.

Now it is there for her to BE explored by those who pay the most to travel the fastest to get to her. No one else will be able to, and she won’t dare venture upon it. How would she find her old favorite places? They will be far back there, somewhere, behind all the fastest traffic on the road. Competition, which used to concentrate on offering a better product as the lure – will now be about traveling faster, and faster, and faster than your competitors. It will be a fight to the finish – a road on which the fastest race car wins owned by those who can afford to pay – first prize the ability to deliver shock treatments to the Golden Goose to force her to lay ever more eggs. Gone will be the days when she could wander abroad on the information super-highway under control of her own fancy. She will be in her pen, and her fancy will be controlled. It will not be a pretty sight. Everyone will have to stay off the road but the fastest race cars. No traffic cop will be able to make sense of it, so it will become chaos quickly.

Fairy tales really can come true, even in the digital age. If the Golden Goose loses her will to, there may come a day when no matter how fast the race-car owners can get to her, or how much they zap her with stimulants “proven” to work, she just won’t lay her golden eggs anymore. Then what will you do? Leaving her her real freedom – not that “freedom” you refer to – might have been more lucrative in the end. But it’s always the Klondike. There seems to be no other model.

Nice touch about having us make our emails and mailing addresses public. Will those who vote “Yes” on this proposition be doing that, too?