

I am submitting this comment regarding proceeding 17-108. Based on the fact that for many Americans like me the only available Internet service providers are regulated monopolies, and are few in number. In my case there are a total of two ISPs which serve the location of my house. One is the entity formerly known as the telephone company and the other is the entity which also serves cable TV. That's it.

In my case--and that of many other Americans--there is the barest hint of competition when only two possible providers are available.

The FCC's position on this proceeding presumes a viable competitive market, with a sufficient number of existing or soon-to-be-existing ISPs, at least one of which will provide Internet service of a nature or type that satisfies the needs of our citizens. The current numerically and regulatorily restricted suite of competitors in the market serving my house--and many other American's locations--makes the FCC's presumption of a viable competitive market laughable in my opinion.

If the proceeding was talking about something as banal as which new design features were to be allowed on newly manufactured cordless telephones I would have no objection--plenty of competition in the phone market. Instead we are talking about THE main conduit which Americans use for not only insignificant fluff like 'entertainment', but also news and search results. We are talking about what is, essentially, the access route to the world's largest library.

I submit to the FCC that there should be at least one regulated, unrestricted conduit--an ISP--which operates as a regulated utility of the type like the 'telephone company' of old.

Placing the throttle of information access under the control of an insufficient number of competitors--now and likely into the near future--is messing around with the roots of an informed populace. It is messing with the roots of democracy in a way that will probably not make America Great Again but has the distinct possibility of making America bend to the will of just a few large companies.

We have arrived at our current situation through defacto Net Neutrality. Moving forward with this proceeding has the potential to make for more and better competition--yes--but also has the potential to skew the information playing field in favor of what a few large companies wish to sell. The FCC is supposed to be both the watchdog and cheerleader. Do not forget the watchdog portion of your mission.

Sincerely,

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