I am writing against the FCC’s attempts to deregulate internet service providers (ISPs). As a citizen and user of internet services, I am worried that without specific regulation barring such behavior, the ISPs will use their effective control of the customer to force shoddy service and block better services. This will damped innovation, by preventing great new ideas from access to the marketplace in which they might succeed, lower customer benefit by limiting or preventing their ability to use such services, and likely increase costs to the end customers, who ultimately bear the cost. If you really want to “Restore Internet Freedom” to the majority of the people, then this is a horrible idea and will achieve the exact opposite.

In addition, in a world in which access and use of information results in competitive advantage, why would you want to reduce the advantage to all of the innovators that have brought so many technologies to fruition, in favor of ISPs that have repeatedly failed to do so? Ever since AOL, ISPs have been trying to offer “value added services” to their customers, which are so horrifically bad that customers uniformly turn to other services. Even in the TV space, cable providers are losing market share because they just don’t understand (or maybe want) to meet customer needs, since they have an effective monopoly. Why do you want to give them more monopolistic control over content? How will it benefit anyone but the ISPs themselves, and of course the politicians to whom they donate?

We stand at a time of increasing global competitiveness. Already many in the third world have better access to internet services than do Americans, especially in the mobile space. Letting ISPs block or restrict access to some content will clearly have a dampening effect, their customers will suffer, and American competitiveness in the world will also likely fall. I am truly struggling to find a reason why you might think this policy to be a good one.