December 13th, 2017

To Whom It May Concern;

I am writing today to express my concern with the upcoming vote to end net neutrality. I strongly support net neutrality, backed by title 2 oversight of ISPs. As someone who uses the internet every day as part of my work with a non-profit museum, I can tell you that having a free and open internet is crucial to everyone. If my workplace had to pay to view certain sites, it would cut into our budget, reducing the ability we have to reach the public, and therefore our effectiveness in educating the populace at large about our connection to our history. It would also hinder our ability to find resources and vendors to stock our gift shop, which contributes greatly to our profits and offsets the cost of maintaining the museum. It is not an overstatement to say that revoking net neutrality would be nothing short of a death sentence for small businesses and non-profits like ours, who rely on the internet for most, if not all, of their business.

A free and open internet is also a large source of educational material and news. Those who cannot afford to have an internet connection of their own benefit from the local public libraries being able to provide that service at no charge. I worry very much about how an end to net neutrality would hamper the ability of such institutions to keep providing this service to the community. Having to pay for internet with packages akin to cable television would take away resources from the underprivileged that desperately need them.

I worry that taking away a free and open internet will lead to companies showing favoritism to certain sites, leading to news being skewed in favor of “left-leaning” or “right-leaning” coverage of events. There is enough partisanship already, and news should not be cherry-picked to show what one side or another deems the correct viewpoint. We need access to an unbiased media, and I believe that we would not have that without net neutrality.

Ending net neutrality would only benefit the telecommunications companies, and add to their bottom line while hurting everyone else. No good can come of a world where information is blocked, slowed, and funneled into what a corporation thinks is the best channel. To start down that path can lead to a world of terrifying prospects that I cannot imagine. I am humbling asking, in fact, pleading, that you keep net neutrality backed with title 2 oversight of ISPs for the benefit of the people.

Sincerely,

Heather Rice