

Comments on Inquiry Concerning the Deployment of Advanced Telecommunications Capability to All Americans in a Reasonable and Timely Fashion

I am not an expert in telecommunications, but as a consumer, I'm well aware of the various studies and findings that telecommunication companies and consumer groups have generated. To some of the conclusions posted by the Telecoms, I find their rational absurd.

We all understand that their goal is to generate wealth for their stockholders, and in turn, bonuses for their CEOs. We are also aware that for decades, there have been momentous efforts to fend off any real competition. They make more money by restricting the choices available to the public, or pretending that other technologies represent viable alternatives. As represented by some of the most hated companies in the nation due to their abysmal customer service, and extraordinary claims of helping the public by throttling service to induce higher fees, little of their information supports any conclusion other than a desire to not participate in an open market.

These companies bombard the public with all of the features available with their services, only to provide minimal capabilities, without going to high end packages. While there may be competition in major population center, it certainly is not the case for the majority of the country. Claims of wireless technologies being viable alternatives are ludicrous due to many of the same companies imposing the same limiting restrictions to that technology, too. Due to issues with satellite technology, I do not find it in the same league with the land based technologies. My area has the choice of one cable internet provider, or dial up. There have been minimal, if any, improvements to the infrastructure, because the public only has the choice of the single provider, or nothing. The delivered speed is nothing like the advertised speed.

With all of the Telecom advertising the benefits of internet service, the current definition of broadband is insufficient to meet the technologies used. The definition needs to raise to the current public's expectation of the service. While the Telecoms will bemoan the loss of not being able to make their current claims in selling lower end products, they may decide to actual try to compete and increase capabilities to match their nearest competitor.

One argument I find extraordinary is the data cap or throttling nonsense. The argument is that because of the high requirements of actually using the systems like the Telecoms advertise you can, the high users will be capped, throttled, or managed, during peak times to reduce the users impact on the system. If the customer doesn't like it, then the customer is advised to move to a usage plan and pay extra for usage above the cap. This logic leads to one of two conclusions:

- 1.) The system is overtaxed, then instead of infrastructure upgrades in high demand, high population (high customer density) areas, they'll be happy to keep charging up the bill on higher paying customers while throttling the public to make capacity. Pure profit.
- 2.) If the system isn't overtaxed, then they are simply throttling to generate increased revenues. Pure profit.

Like the customer service horror stories, nothing in these ideas involves trying to win over customers with better service at lower rates. There isn't the competition to provide a need to do so. It is more profitable to spend the money on lobbyists to protect their turf from competition.

I feel that the definition of broadband should be increased to reflect what the public expects when they make the decision to pay for these services. I feel that the advertised speeds should reflect what the Telecoms ACTUALLY provide in the area. While I personally disagree with data caps or throttling, if it

turns out to be necessary, the caps should reflect WHAT THE SYSTEM IS ADVERTISED TO DO, not another Telecom “gotcha”.

Sincerely,

Thomas Lucas