

Verizon Communications Inc., owner of Verizon Wireless was recently caught red handed by New Networks Institute and Teletruth in making “two-faced” statements to the U.S. Federal Communications Commission in regard to broadband reclassification under Title II of the Telecommunications Act. According to comments filed by Verizon Communications in the FCC’s Open Internet proceeding (yes the same Verizon which sued the agency over its 2010 Open Internet Order that was struck down last year) utility rules for Internet service providers would harm investment in broadband networks. Verizon has repeatedly urged the FCC to avoid imposing new regulations, and yet Verizon’s statements to the FCC have avoided mentioning that its own utility style common carrier status helped the company charge landline phone customers higher prices to fund construction of the fiber network over which it provides FIOS Internet and TV. Verizon’s claims to the FCC are in direct contradiction to their own filings, statements, SEC and state based filings, the company’s cable franchise agreement—every fiber optic wire appears to be Title II. It is worth reviewing whether other companies like AT&T which is in the process of trying to acquire DirecTV and Comcast which is seeking to acquire Time Warner Cable have made similar contradictory statements or filings. I urge regulators to take a look at whether AT&T and Comcast have made similar lies in regards to their infrastructure investments. Does Comcast’s filings with state and local regulators including cable franchise agreements classify its broadband network as a utility? Does Time Warner Cable’s own filings refer to its network as a utility under Title II? What about AT&T? These companies cannot take advantage of any benefits provided by Title II (as described above in Verizon’s case) and at the same time lie to our faces and those of regulators that utility rules would harm network investment. Please consider their half truths as part of the record for any merger deals they are presently pursuing.