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I have found out about this docket through a third party. Their summary seems to suggest that this will prevent individuals from being able to install a different OS on a machine with a wifi transmitter or be able to install new firmware on wifi transmitters.

I must say that this is a concerning matter.

For one, this will provide closed source OSes with more power as they can get installed on laptops while open source, such as Linux, will be restricted to desktops with appropriate drivers. Having the option to install open source OSes is the only way I know of to keep my laptop's manufacturer from forcing bloatware onto my laptop. They also breath new life into old hardware. I personally have a refurbished laptop that runs Linux really well and think this is a potential way to provide computers to the poor (refurbished machines with open source OSes). Such a rule would heavily restrict this capability.

Another concern that impacts me personally is the restriction of firmware installation to what the manufacturer provides. There are open source firmwares, such as DD-WRT and OpenWRT, which provide much more capability to consumer routers than what come out of the box. There are some routers that ship with a manufacturer's version of these firmwares, but they are more expensive. Instead, I can buy a cheaper router and install this firmware and have a fairly powerful firewall and monitoring suite on my home network.

As a matter of fact, I do have a router running DD-WRT. I originally used it for my home network but when I moved my new ISP required me to get a modem that provided wifi capability. Since the wiring in my apartment did not allow me to provide wired networking to my office, I repurposed this router to act as a wifi receiver then plugged my desktop into it. Now I can connect devices to my network from my office using cables. This would not have been possible with the original firmware on this device and I would have had to lay down more cable or hire someone to fix the existing coaxial cable in my apartment.

Lastly, there are other projects to consider. Following the tradition of Samizdat literature, routers running custom firmware were used to distribute the book "Gay Propaganda" during the Sochi Olympics. These routers did not hijack anyone's wifi signal, they simply broadcast as an open router and let people connect to them then presented the book as a web page.

Similar firmware is used around the world for areas with low connectivity or little ways to share data. The PirateBox and LibraryBox projects come to mind. These allow people to chat and share documents anonymously. The LibraryBox project even comes with a copy of the Gutenberg Project so literature can be distributed. These projects are vital in maintaining a free society.

So please consider continuing to allow open source firmware and operating systems to be installed on devices with wifi capability.