

As you no doubt are aware, almost 30 million people connect to the Internet through an independent Internet Service Provider (ISP).

Freedom of choice is an issue that affects us all, both independent ISPs and consumers alike. This latest attack could rob me of my ability to choose my own Internet provider; in fact, it could force that very provider that I have depended on over the years out of business. This issue could destroy thousands of small businesses and put their employees on the unemployment rolls. It gives control of the Internet over to the big telephone companies and the big cable companies. This is bad for businesses and consumers alike.

Right now four of the main Òbaby BellsÓ Qwest, Verizon, SBC and BellSouth are asking you, the FCC, for exemptions from the regulations that allow others (namely independent Internet access providers) to use their networks. What this means to me is the end of choice! Many who use high-speed services (over 50% of the country) will no longer be able to choose your provider. My phone company will become my ISP and if I do not like the service packages or the prices they are charging I will be out of luck.

This is not the American way. I urge you to halt these petitions!