

Via email

03/01/2007

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Dear Kevin Martin,

The Internet has become an integral part of American life. We rely on it to learn, work, play and communicate on issues of importance to our communities. That is why all Americans - regardless of income, education or location - need access to Internet service that's fast, free and family-friendly.

Our nation's future broadband system must be engineered to bridge the digital divide that now separates too many Americans because of their economic circumstances and where they live. We must extend to all Americans the opportunity to take part in e-commerce, use government services, access news, information and educational opportunities and participate in civic discourse online.

Unfortunately, current broadband prices in the United States are too high and far too many households have limited or no connectivity. No American should be left behind because existing broadband options are not affordable or unavailable. Furthermore, the government should be working with business leaders to make sure that all students have Internet access that is fast, reliable and as safe as possible. Parents and teachers are currently saddled with the burden of trying to protect children from indecent content on the Internet. Network level filtration of indecent content is the best solution available to ensure that children cannot access explicit Websites, allowing parents and teachers to focus on the educational resources available online.

Implementation of a fast, free, and family-friendly universal broadband access program, like that supported by the Coalition for Free Broadband Now, is a necessary step towards protecting our children online while ensuring that all Americans have affordable Internet access. This solution would remove many of the technological challenges currently faced by underserved communities in both urban and rural. It will also help build an Internet-savvy population to drive the American economy to compete globally, provide the equality of access that is such an important step towards equality of opportunity. I urge you to take action now to ensure these steps are taken.

Sincerely,

James Calmese

CC: Jonathan Adelstein
Deborah Taylor Tate
Robert McDowell
Michael Copps
Sen. Barack Obama
Sen. Richard Durbin
Rep. Phil Hare