

Our small business depends on net neutrality

You've seen these words many times, but they apply to me and my business directly: "Net Neutrality is essential to free speech, equal opportunity and economic innovation in America."

Think of how many Americans are self-employed or employed by small businesses that rely on free and fair access to the Internet. We already deal with the uncertainties of starting a business on the money we'd otherwise be spending on health insurance, our homes, even food. Why give the advantage to companies that are beyond secure?

"Since the FCC removed this basic protection in 2005, the top executives of phone and cable companies have stated their intention to become the Internet's gatekeepers and to discriminate against Web sites that don't pay their added tolls."

If we had to pay added tolls, our small Internet-based business would fold. Three families would be unemployed, with all the ramifications to society that entails. Multiply that by all the small businesses that are getting by on a shoestring that cannot bear yet another expense, another tax. And then count up the social costs.

"This fundamental change would end the open Internet as we know it. It would damage my ability to connect with others, share information and participate in our 21st century democracy and economy."

Why are we sending people to bring democracy to other countries when we are threatened with losing it in the most democratizing system we've ever had?

"The FCC must ensure that broadband providers do not block, interfere with or discriminate against any lawful Internet traffic based on its ownership, source or destination."

And I couldn't say that any better myself.

Lonnie Chu