

My family in NE TX has virtually no high-speed Internet access. They can't afford satellite service, so all they have is dial-up. This makes them virtually second-class citizens these days. They can't shop, send or receive photos, or download written and graphic materials except at excruciatingly slow speeds. Consequently, they just don't use the Internet for these purposes, which amounts to an information handicap and actually costs them money (time, postage, gasoline, etc.) when they can least afford it.

When I travel to visit them, I can't continue to conduct my sole proprietorship business without driving 35-40 miles to a town where I can use high-speed wireless. Rather than do that, I just don't use the Internet when I'm there. This acts as a damper on both my business and the visit, because I can't afford to be off the Internet for more than a couple of days.

I am appalled that the U.S. is not on par with other nations in this regard. We rank 16th in the world in the Internet access allowed to our residents. This is a shameful fact, in my opinion an indictment of the extent to which control of this country has been given over to profit-greedy corporations.

The technology exists to blanket the nation with wireless access; all we need is the will to do it, and you are in a position to express that will. Please reserve for the people of this country at least a substantial portion of the bandwidth you are putting up for sale. If you don't, you will be pounding one more nail into the coffin of U.S. democracy.

Sincerely,