

First I want to thank the FCC for making it so simple to submit comments.

I support the concept of government enforcement of "net neutrality" on telecom companies. For an example of what can happen in a world without telecom companies treating all traffic equally, look at other countries where the major telecom company has banned VOIP services such as Vonage and Skype to protect their telephone monopoly. Application such as Vonage are an amazing example of the type of innovation made possible with the Internet. For example, many US military service members use these applications to talk with family back home in the US for low rates or even free. The risk is that since the ISP's are offering telephone services of their own, they may decide to begin blocking such traffic on their networks. From what I understand, some ISP's are promising not to block, but only throttle traffic. Skype allows video chat, which is amazing since I am currently overseas and I can have a video chat with my family back home in North Carolina. They are on Bellsouth (now AT&T). If AT&T decided to throttle this traffic, the video feed could be so degraded as to be worthless. The same could happen for the audio feed. In that case all I would be left with is making expensive landline international calls.

But the US is a free market, surely if customers do not approve of such restrictions they will move to another service? Unfortunately this is just not possible, and the telecom industry is far from a free market. Most areas in the US only have one or two broadband providers, and these are usually the local phone company and the local cable company, government-protected monopolies. If we are going to go down the path of allowing these companies to discriminate traffic at will, then their needs to be more competition in the home broadband market.

So we need either more government involvement to protect consumer rights regarding how they may use their Internet connections, or the pipes (telephone, cable, etc.) need to be opened up to more competition (for example, allowing consumers to choose their ISP, regardless of who actually owns the line, like how some states have made electricity service more competitive by allowing consumers to choose the power company).

Real choice, not just The Cable Company or the Telephone Company.

Thank you