

The only reason the internet has worked so well as it has thus far is that all traffic is treated equally, allowing the free and open flow of information and ideas without restriction, limitation, or additional fees levied. In this way, the common network acts as a public resource for the benefit of all parties involved.

Consumers already pay for the use of the internet, as do website owners. To permit "middleman" carriers to levy additional charges will only increase the costs for everyone else involved, and there is far too great a chance that these carriers will abuse their new powers under a non-neutral system to effectively extort additional fees from one or both ends ("pay up, or your traffic goes in the slow lane").

Additionally, such ability would give carriers the option to enforce their own views (or those of any willing to pay them enough) on the general public, restricting certain behaviors that they disagree with even if they are perfectly legal. Not to mention that such would call the legal protections of common-carrier status into question.

As the internet is a common resource for education and entertainment, available to all for a nominal cost, allowing such behavior by the so-called middlemen will only sabotage future growth and public benefit that would otherwise be gained by the continually falling cost and increasing benefits to the public.

As our nation is already falling behind in all measures of fast and open access to information, and the benefits thereof, this is something we could ill afford.