

Keep grassroots democracy alive!

I am a retired editor of scholarly books and now the full-time caregiver for my husband, who is a Parkinson's patient. My husband and I are both 64 years old. In our lifetime there have been many new technologies and inventions with significant impacts on the quality of daily domestic life and public discourse. I can think of none so important as the Internet and the Web. Developed with money from taxpayers and with intellectual input from the best brains of this country and many other countries around the world, it is our best hope for keeping POWER in check and letting the sunlight in. Why should business, already far too powerful, be given yet another opportunity to amplify the voices of the wealthy, who through their lobbyists are constantly shouting down those of us who can see that the bottom line should not always be the top priority. We the people paid for the development of this marvelous tool. Let us all have equal access to it.

Net Neutrality is essential to free speech, equal opportunity and economic innovation in America. 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.

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. 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.