

Verizon's blocking of NARAL's text messaging campaign violates the principles of Free Speech which are critical to our nation's communications. The unrestricted ability to communicate with the people and organizations of my choice is just as important in text as it is in voice.

The argument that the wireless carriers make that they should be able to exercise editorial control over content the same way media companies do is very scary. We have strict limits on media ownership to ensure that we have a diversity of points of view in every market. If the wireless carriers want editorial control they should be required to invite real and diverse competition so that we can ensure freedom of choice in media and content. The carriers are way too concentrated for that. We need to open up the airwaves a lot more before we could be assured of any diversity there.

If they want control they should also be subject to liability for the content of their networks. But they want common carrier protections from liability.

This is hugely important. The FCC has an opportunity to define not just our freedom to assemble and to speak but you have the opportunity to define our culture, and our economy.

We have built the economy we have today because we have been open to innovation. Allowing the wireless carriers to move into content and to filter and control over what happens on their networks will dampen innovation as they use that control to protect their current monopolies.

Don't do it. Make sure that you protect the critical asset that differentiates the United States from all of the emerging economies that undercut our prices for work that can be outsourced. Innovation is our trump card. If you give that away by granting too much control over our core communications infrastructure to large organizations whose record on innovation pales compared to what has happened on open networks like the internet or on open wireless networks in other parts of the world. You would not just be giving away our freedom of speech, you would be undermining innovation and accelerating the decline in our leadership of the global economy.

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