

06/04/09

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: A National Broadband Plan for Our Future, GN Docket No. 09-51

Dear Ms. Dortch,

An open and accessible Internet is essential to America's future. It will help revitalize our economy, improve our education and health care, engage millions more people in our democracy and give new meaning to freedom of speech. In crafting the national broadband plan, the Federal Communications Commission must protect Internet users from corporate gatekeepers who seek to keep prices high and speeds slow, limit access to content and stifle innovations and market choice. Net Neutrality must be a basic and enforceable rule of the Internet. The plan must also ensure that every American -- regardless of their race, income or location -- can connect to broadband at prices everyone can afford. Allowing powerful corporate interests to dictate the future of modern communications is a mistake that cannot be repeated. Our nation's health in the 21st century requires that the FCC puts a people-powered Internet first. This is first and foremost a free speech issue. China's censoring! of social networks like Twitter and Facebook underscores the stifling nature of this kind of control of the internet, whether governmental or corporate. A free interchange of ideas through every medium is vital for both democracy and the economic health of any country. The US, where the internet was born, should not only take the lead in offering equal opportunity access to the internet, but in protecting that access from what would be, in effect, corporate control. Already, internet access in this country is far less free and more expensive because of corporate monopolies than it is elsewhere in the world and there's something deeply wrong with that. Please make sure that this situation doesn't get worse. Even better, let's improve it.