



Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: GN Docket No. 09-191

January 8, 2010

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners:

With jobless rates as high as they've been since the Great Depression and even higher unemployment rates among minorities, the Internet can be a powerful tool in acquiring the skills needed to succeed in the current job market. Access and ability to use the Internet help make it easier for people to find available positions in their industry, network in ways not previously possible, and train for new careers.

That is why it is so important to close the digital divide—the gap that currently exists between low-income and minority communities in Internet usage with their more affluent counterparts across the country. Greater access to a high-speed Internet connection will allow these individuals the same opportunities to succeed, but right now there are too many un-served or underserved consumers.

For these reasons, I am very concerned about the unintended consequences of the FCC attempting to regulate the Internet with the “net neutrality” that could have a chilling effect on further investment. Ensuring that minority and low-income communities benefit from an investment in broadband deployment should be the FCC's top priority; not needless regulation that could slow this growth.

Broadband providers have shown that they are committed to keeping costs low and rolling out additional coverage to help close the gap. But the private sector cannot do the job if the government puts up barriers that effectively penalize the carriers for expanding service—instead; we need the FCC to support a National Broadband Plan that supports these providers.

Doing so will allow more Americans to subscribe to an affordable Internet connection, and ultimately, expand their educational and employment opportunities. It is time for all people—regardless of race or income—to share in the benefits of the Internet revolution.

Sincerely,

Rev. Raleigh Trammell
President
SCLC