

It is vital.

I am writing to express my encouragement for reclassification of the internet from an "information service" to a "telecommunications infrastructure". I will begin this expression first by providing my personal view on the historical context of the DC circuit case, and second by connecting this discussion directly to the details of reclassification.

In my personal view, the historical context for this case goes back hundreds of years, but most pointedly to the late 1800's when corporations were liberated from the corporate charter that allowed governing oversight to ensure corporate service of public interests. Around this same time passing of the Santa Clara Act gave corporations similar rights of speech as the individual citizen under our legal framework. These constitute palpable distortions of a clear and healthy political philosophy, and a reasonable point to identify as the beginning of corporate ascendancy.

Despite oscillations since then, corporate influence on our national fabric has only mounted. Given an especially large boost by Reagan's deregulation doctrine, the last few decades have seen a proliferation of problems: concentration of wealth, debt increases, environmental negligence, labor abuses, and military belligerency. These can be traced back to the escalating dominance of corporate power - globally, and specifically over the government. A respected professor from my university calls the public sector private sector fusion, combined with centrist politics, a "corpocracy". This terminology indicates the extent to which such developments are impinging on the necessary qualities for an empowered democracy.

In a very recent context, however, I want to mention three important pieces of law, three major shifts in the political economic structure of our country, which have had no opportunity to take effect yet. The Citizens vs. United case freed corporations from any limits on political campaign contributions. The health care bill, while progressive in some ways, solidified the role of insurance corporations in the health care industry. Finally, the DC circuit case challenging the FCC places the internet, the last medium for open democratic exchange, severely at risk from similar abuses for which history has already provided ample evidence. Combining this development with a reminder that Bush illegally tapped phone lines during his presidency, and the real possibility of national censorship according to corporate interests of the rich elite looms.

The result of this analysis is a worrisome trend toward corporate dominance that is unprecedented, driven by the cultural engines of our country. To rejuvenate a healthy model of government involvement, and quell the rising supremacy of titanic private sector power, the internet needs to be protected. While I don't necessarily advocate for full neutrality of the internet (I favor the "open access" policy proven by the Next Generation Connectivity report), the FCC needs to maintain general power over its regulatory parameters. Otherwise, it will roll over to corporate control, unable to address the issue in the first place.

Reclassifying the internet as a "telecommunications service" is a single, but absolutely vital, step toward restoring corporations as servants to the public interest, rather than monopolistic masters of our quickly degrading civil fabric. Please recognize how important the internet is to safeguard democracy!

Thank you for reading my words. They are not those of a lawyer, a lobbyist, or a businessman. They are those of a conscientious citizen trusting you to support the current pro-neutrality 3-2 majority.