

In the past I have commented at the FCC's Monterey localism forum, held in 2004 ((with my comments made part of a proposed rulemaking report that was released in January of 2008 at <http://fjallfoss.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view.action?id=6519893895>)). I rely on the Internet as a public platform for free speech, equal opportunity, economic growth and innovation. Without vital Net Neutrality protections, companies like Verizon and Comcast, which have a commercial incentive to limit the free-flowing Web, can decide whether I will have a voice online. These companies should not have the power to determine my fate on the Internet. An open internet is vital to the free flow of information in a modern day democracy, where more and more of our information has gone digital and where it is increasingly important that all people who perform information transmittals online have equal access to the common online infrastructure, much in the same way that we have rules of the road w!

hen you hop in the car to get on the highway. This holds true even for people who access more data than others -- bandwidth hogs -- because so long as the system has the capacity to handle it, people who utilize incrementally more than others should not be discriminated against by administrators of a system unless their usage is malicious or harmful in some way to the localized infrastructure that they are accessing. In principle, an open internet should allow everyone to hop on, everywhere, and access the internet at approximately the same rate, unless there are hardware or software problems or issues such as those you encounter in DSL transmission, like 'being too far from the hub' which causes slowness and thus, diminished access. In principle, an open Internet is part of my life because it is part of our United States democracy in a digital age. It is about digital equality.

The FCC must have the power to protect consumer access to the most important communications medium of our time. The FCC must stand with me and keep the Internet in the hands of the people who use it every day. Please reclassify broadband as a "telecommunications service" and keep the Internet open and free of corporate gatekeepers. If there are either internet service providers or government entities that are controlling the bandwidth allocated to specific sites or ranges of sites and areas of viewing based on content or other provisions based on either some specific or broad use of discretion or a set of policies, this will rob millions of citizen consumers of the ability to equitably access the basic infrastructure established specifically to enhance access to information.

I urge you to, before action, review this FCC document having to do with localism.

<http://fjallfoss.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view.action?id=6519893895>

In many ways the discussions of low power FM relative to localism at the time the document was composed in 2007 are similar to the concepts of Net Neutrality being discussed today. There is a need to have a greater degree of local forms of information, which are provided by and through the Internet, and this enhances the ability for many to advance democracy in a digital age.

I urge you to abandon older forms of definitions and classifications and provide for more regulatory flexibility such that the Net Neutrality provisions could be provided for both in rulemaking and in legislation.

