



December 8, 2010

Commissioner Michael Copps  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Copps,

I write today to introduce you to CONNECT and to encourage your support of the Chairman's Proposal to Preserve a Free and Open Internet.

CONNECT is an award-winning organization focused on propelling creative ideas and emerging technologies to the marketplace by connecting entrepreneurs with the comprehensive resources they need to sustain economic viability and business vibrancy. Over the last 25 years, CONNECT's commercialization capacity-building model for start-ups has been replicated in U.S. cities, states and regions, as well as overseas. We have recently been awarded the 2010 Innovation in Economic Development Award by the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration. As a regional innovation development organization, our efforts in Southern California span the spectrum of technologies from IT, wireless health, software, clean energy, environmental, life sciences/biotech, defense and security, and sports/action technologies.

As you well know, the Internet plays different but critical roles in advancing emerging technologies in each of those sectors, thus our interest in the Chairman's Proposal is profound. Although, the Chairman's Proposal takes a step further into the regulatory world than we'd ideally like, we recognize the practical and substantive benefits to the Chairman's Proposal. Chief among those benefits is the certainty the Proposal will inject into the contentiousness that currently plagues this important policy arena.

With the Proposal's modest approach, which sets rules for the information superhighway that various stakeholders can understand and accept, start-up companies will have the freedom and technical assurance they need to develop their creations and chase the American Dream. Furthermore, the investment community will have better clarity as to how to evaluate pitches from Internet-related start-ups. This clarity and certainty that the Chairman's proposal will bring, will unleash a synergy between research, development and investment that will spark new apps, more entrepreneurs starting small businesses, and create jobs.

We appreciate and understand your previously stated position on this issue. Nevertheless, we encourage you to support the Chairman's Proposal not as a call to abandon your principles, but to take the most practical and available step toward implementing a regulatory framework that will give stakeholders and the general public a real test of the intentions and behaviors of network gatekeepers. If under the Proposal, those gatekeepers act in inappropriate ways contrary to preserving a free and open Internet, the case to move toward more regulation will be



strengthened. However, if network gatekeepers abide by the Proposal's new regulatory framework, we all get what we want—a free and open Internet coupled with gatekeeper transparency. For these reasons we again urge you to support the Chairman's Proposal at the FCC meeting later this month.

Thank you for the time and effort you are giving to evaluating the Proposal and for taking the time to hear the voice of the start-ups from our region. If there is any other way we can assist you, please do not hesitate to contact me at 202.412.7791 or [timothy@connect.org](mailto:timothy@connect.org).

Best wishes,

*Timothy Tardibono*

Timothy Tardibono

Director of Public Policy