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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

TAKE THE PLEDGE, BE A DIGITAL INCLUSION CHAMPION!

We are community organizations from across the nation working to secure a national commitment to universal service, equal access, self-representation, and non-discrimination online. The internet has become a critical tool for connection, communication, and change in the lives of all people, especially the poor and people of color. Traditionally marginalized voices are critical in this debate. In this historic moment when internet rules are being made, **we ask the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Congress to champion the cause of digital inclusion and create a National Broadband Plan and Network Neutrality rules that affirm the following principles:**

- 1. Broadband today should be defined as a universal service, just like phones were in the 1980s.** Like telephones, broadband is a public resource and not simply a private enterprise. Extended to mobile devices and protected by regulation- universal service can provide the resources and rules to support full broadband adoption and access in poor communities and communities of color.
- 2. Protect free speech and self-representation online, and create new platforms for communication, connection, and social change.** Network neutrality rules are the internet's Bill of Rights and protect free speech online. We must limit the power of corporate gatekeepers by enforcing transparent rules that prevent content-blocking and protect people of color and the poor from being subject to the same conditions of bias and misrepresentation we've historically faced in broadcast and print media.
- 3. Our ability to pay should not determine or decrease the quality of broadband service delivered to poor rural and urban communities.** Internet service providers are spreading fear by saying if they can't manage traffic to make the largest profits, they will be forced to limit broadband build-out in poor communities. No one should be forced to choose between substandard service or no service at all. Strong network neutrality rules can prevent this kind of digital redlining and price gouging in poor communities – and protect critical free online services used by millions.
- 4. Open networks create innovation and competition, support the growth of small businesses and media diversity, and lead to empowered and economically viable communities.** In a time of economic crisis, open networks ensure that communities of color and the poor can take advantage of broadband as an emerging economic force. High barriers to media entry in the media have resulted in people of color representing fewer than 3% of full power TV owners. Strong network neutrality rules lower barriers to media ownership, ensure that every idea has a chance, and increase economic equity in struggling communities.
- 5. Equal access and non-discrimination online are internet principles that must be protected by strong public policy, Congress and the FCC.** Regulation that supports universal access and preserves the principles of an open Internet provide for the common good. Policy-makers, civil rights leaders, social change groups, and under-represented constituencies must work together to champion the cause of Internet freedom for us all. Our economic empowerment, democratic participation, and civil and human rights depend on it.



MY ORGANIZATION PLEDGES TO BE A DIGITAL INCLUSION CHAMPION

We support the Media Action Grassroots Network in affirming the principles listed here. As a Digital Inclusion Champion, my organization asks the FCC and Congress to create a National Broadband Plan that defines broadband as a universal service, and network neutrality rules that protect an open and non-discriminatory internet.

Full Name (first, last): _____

Name of Organization: _____

Position in Organization: _____ How many individuals does your organization represent? _____

Organization Mailing Address (street address, suite #, city, state, zip code): _____

Organization Phone Number (with my extension): _____