

The following document explains how the FCC's deregulatory policies for the Internet have failed to protect competition and why they should abandon such bad policies and resume protecting competition starting by denying AT&T T Mobil merger.

The *New York Times* reports today that the U.S. has sunk to 25th in a global ranking of Internet speeds, just behind Romania.

Why? Because our nation's regulators abandoned an earlier commitment to fostering competition in the marketplace for service providers.

In the years that followed the signing of the 1996 Telecommunications Act, lobbyists working for the most powerful ISPs pressured a compliant FCC to tear down all of the important safeguards established by Congress.

While the U.S. blindly followed a path of "deregulation," other nations in Europe and Asia beefed up their pro-competitive policies. The results are evident in our rapid decline from the top of almost every global measure of Internet services, availability and speed.

My colleague Derek Turner writes:

"By turning its back on the 1996 Act, the FCC ordered up a future of digital mediocrity and stuck American consumers with the bill. Americans pay more per month for broadband than consumers in all but seven of the 30 nations in the OECD.... When price and speed are considered together as a measure of value, we see that Americans pay more per megabit per second (Mbps) than consumers in many other countries. The value of U.S. connections is some four times less than that of countries like France, and is **only slightly better than the value of connections in Hungary**, a country with a per capita GDP nearly two-and-a-half times lower than the United States."

The lack of competition has turned America into a broadband backwater. Powerful phone and cable companies legislated and lobbied their way to a broadband "duopoly," where nationwide they now control 97 percent of the fixed line residential broadband market.

The lack of choice for consumers has driven prices up and services down. Today's *New York Times* reports that it's gotten so bad for some parts of the country that it having an impact on jobs, education, economic growth and public safety.

"This is about our overall competitiveness," Jonathan Adelstein of the Rural Utilities Service told the *Times*. "Without broadband, especially in rural areas, kids might not reach their full potential. And we can't expect to be competitive in a global economy."

If you want to read the article here's the link:

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/14/us/downloads-are-slowest-in-idaho-study-finds.html?_r=1

I encourage you to reverse this decision/mistake starting by denying the AT&T T Mobil merger and set us on a path toward more competition and consumer choice online. Reclassify broadband under Title II and mandate more competition.

