

Ironically AT&T shareholders support Network Neutrality the company, its board and executives not so much which would be further threatened by AT&T T Mobil merger. I urge the FCC to reject the merger and as noted in Title II docket (10-127) and Open Internet docket (09-191) reclassify broadband under Title II and use competition mandates to preserve Network Neutrality in fixed wire-line and guarantee it exists for wireless also.

A memo from a group of AT&T shareholders ? including the Beastie Boys? Mike D ? shows signs of a revolt from within. It calls for the company ?to publicly commit to operate its wireless broadband network consistent with network neutrality principles.?

That?s a big deal. In just a few weeks, the Senate will vote on a ?resolution of disapproval? that would strip the FCC of its ability to enforce Net Neutrality rules. This move from AT&T?s shareholders ? targeting a company whose former chief made it clear he intended to violate Net Neutrality ? signals some serious dissent within the ranks.

In addition to Mike D, shareholders include the social justice-focused Nathan Cummings Foundation. Laura Campos, its director of shareholder activities, worries that ?over the longer term, a failure to operate its wireless broadband network in accordance with the principles of network neutrality could negatively impact AT&T?s market share and damage its reputation with consumers.?

Indeed, Net Neutrality is a boon to business. A recent report from the independent Institute for Policy Integrity at NYU suggested that ?Internet infrastructure and content work together to generate huge economic benefits for consumers ? possibly as much as \$5,686 per user, per year.?

These and other concerned shareholders were organized by the Open Media and Information Companies Initiative (Open MIC), which focuses on responsible media practices for corporations. Michael Conner, the organization?s executive director, says that ?Net Neutrality is necessary to insure competition, entrepreneurship, innovation and free expression in the digital economy. That?s why it is so important that the investor voice be heard.?

Shareholders will vote on the memo?s proposal at their meeting in April 2012. Given AT&T?s role as one of the lead opponents of anything smelling of Net Neutrality, this?ll be interesting.