In your latest proposal of new rules, it is very disturbing to think the FCC has suddenly changed its stance on net neutrality. The Internet is a revolutionary technology and net neutrality ensures that it can allow its effects to truly encourage innovation, the spread of free speech and ideas and satisfy consumer demands. I believe this newly proposed “fast lane” rule needs to be rethought.

Currently, many broadband providers (of which many are lobbying for your new proposal) have monopolies in select areas. Not only do many customers lack a quality alternative, but now broadband providers may have the right to selectively throttle certain sites for its users. This is not an open Internet. This is not a free Internet. While the FCC ensured it would need to meet specific criteria to define a “fast lane”, the potential and the likelihood of abuse are too costly to the consumers and actually diminish our nation competitively as the Internet’s influence becomes larger and larger. If the FCC and lawmakers care about the future of this country and consumer rights, they will rigorously enforce net neutrality; otherwise, we may find ourselves slipping into positions of other nations where not only is access poor and uncompetitive, but worse, filtered.

If this “fast lane” proposal is truly honest and is here to stay then consumers should know what they are purchasing from their given Internet service provider. When a person currently purchases Internet access, they are under the assumption that they not only will get the rates that are advertised, but they believe that those rates should be reached by any site whose own access can respond at such a rate. By withholding that they are intentionally throttling traffic to specific sites, Internet service providers are essentially lying to consumers about what they are buying. I believe this list should be made publicly available by any provider who decides to partake in priority traffic. At the very least, such information may lead to competitive disadvantages to providers who do have “fast lanes” (and thus, “slow lanes”) as I believe it is completely obvious that the average Internet user wants their traffic to be as fast as possible, regardless of the site they are visiting.

I sincerely hope that the FCC reminds itself of its previous commitments, but with recent chairman appointments, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the FCC is slowly losing its commitment as an honest, regulatory agency. I wish the FCC had continued to fight, but I’m often finding optimism to be a costly endeavor these days.