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Committee:
Judiciary

House of Representatives
State of South Carolina

May 29, 2014

Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Clyburn:

As an elected official, I understand the unique balance of representing constituents' best interests while effectively working with my colleagues to accomplish common goals. I understand the pressure of competing ideas and the necessity to work across the aisle to come to a compromise that benefits both sides. This is why I am encouraged by Chairman Wheeler's middle ground approach to implementing open Internet rules. He has struck a balance between preserving an open Internet and fostering continued competition, investment and innovation in the Internet marketplace.

Some special interest groups would like you to believe that we should reclassify broadband as Title II telecommunications service. This would be detrimental to our states' fiscal health, development and overall growth. More and more, access to health care and education is dependent on access to the Internet. Reclassifying broadband as a Title II service will slow our economy and decrease investment in broadband innovation. The effects of this will be widespread. South Carolina receives about \$17 billion annually from online commerce – overregulation will hinder this growth and limit opportunities for future jobs.

The direct impact on minorities from the spread of broadband across our state is visible when you examine our communities. Job applications, health care information, online education are all examples of ways that accessibility is vital for all Americans. As we continue to compete nationally for the best access to health care and an educated workforce, we need increased access to broadband. Reclassifying broadband regulation under Title II will significantly stunt this growth by inflicting outdated regulations on our Internet providers. Instead, I encourage you to focus on everyday issues that impact the civil rights and minority communities such as leveraging broadband to increase civic participation and educational gains.

Commissioner Wheeler has chosen a middle ground approach that will both allow innovation while providing a platform for continued investment in broadband infrastructure. Allowing special interest groups on the far-left to reclassify broadband under Title II would subject the vibrant Internet marketplace to the static, unchanging regulations that guard old rotary telephone services, which has experienced little to no innovation in the last century. Instead, we need policy that can change and adapt, as the Internet most certainly will. Overregulation will kill this potential and reverse the progress we have seen in our state.

Standing for Title II would be standing in the way of our communities' growth, development and innovation. I urge you to find common ground that balances growth and innovation with preserving a vibrant open Internet that fosters competition and consumer protection.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bakari Sellers', written over a horizontal line.

Rep. Bakari Sellers

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