

To whom it may concern...

I am concerned that eliminating net neutrality, the monopolies that are the cable companies and other broadband companies will be able to strengthen their monopolies. In the USA, we believe that competition is a good thing. We need competition to ensure that prices stay low and that broadband speeds increase. Just like phone lines, cable companies should be required to open up access to third parties in similar fashion.

Where I live, while I have access to either a phone company or a cable company for internet access, only one comes close to providing broadband speeds. The other is barely faster than dial speeds. I live near Seattle, the home of Microsoft and Amazon and many other large computer companies. One would think that I should have many providers of internet services, but in reality, I do not. I have only my cable provider that can provide speeds over 1.5mbit/second. I pay a premium for these speeds, yet in other areas around the nation where there is real competition, I pay more for 50mbit download/10mbit upload than others pay for 1Gbit upload/download. I live in a new housing development that one might think would have been wired for such things, but no. There is no competition. Builders sign agreements to allow just one or two companies (cable/phone) access to the last mile or there just isn't anyone to provide it. State and local laws around the nation frequently disallow communities from providing their own WAN or MAN as the broadband companies lobby hard to get rid of any possible competition. There is a reason that there is little or no overlap of broadband services among cable companies and phone companies in any given area. Yes it is expensive to provide services because most places mandate underground cabling versus telephone line cabling, but even telephone cabling ends up being expensive (though less than underground). I ask of my government to ensure that monopolies are eliminated or mitigated and that competition reigns as the law of the land helping to ensure ever faster broadband speeds and lower prices, more competition, and providing for the lower barriers to entry for new ideas to reach to the market place instead of raising ever higher barriers that line the pockets of entrenched providers.

I could use the example of the banking industry as providing a lack of competition given their relatively recent global meltdown that was mostly averted via bailouts that kept everything afloat. It was a lack of competition and lack of inventiveness and regulation that allowed greed to rule the banking world. Here you have an opportunity to stop a problem before it becomes large.

Keep net neutrality. It is mandatory to ensure a freer market place, versus a market place that is ruled/run by a handful of monopolies.

Sincerely,

Richard Burk