

Dearest Federal Communications Commission,

I thank you, from the very bottom of my heart for opening, to the public, the chance to express our gratitude for your work. The actions you have taken in recent weeks, however, are very troubling to many of us and have sparked an appropriate backlash. The best way for me to express the impact of your deliberations is to relate to you a story.

Susan owns a small start up company in a major city, but unable to afford the cost of living there herself she commutes from a nearby suburb. She is by no means wealthy, and is not making great waves in the world, but she gets by, delivers a great product, and is happy with her lot in life. That is, until the Department of Transportation decided to repeal and deliberate on future applications of it's often misunderstood "Roadway Neutrality" policy.

Susan herself was unaware of the change at first, she noticed some deliveries coming to later than normal, and a slight reduction of customers, but she chalked it up to market fluctuations and carried about her day. Over the course of the next few weeks, however, with no relief in sight, she decided to do a little research. After pouring through dozens of news articles - not a one fully able to explain the situation to her in a relatable way, she begins to understand that some governmental debate is the result of her disrupted business.

Trusting the government Susan chooses to understand the situation as progress, some eggs must be broken to make an omelette, after all. Politicians, media pundits, government secretaries, and the companies hired to maintain her roadways assure her everything will be back to normal, that there is nothing to worry about, they're just amid construction of a new high-speed toll-based freeway.

The government and businesses finally agree and construction is underway; Susan immediately notices that this is not the promised plan. The roadway companies discovered that they simply don't have the infrastructure or ability to economically expand the roadways, so instead they decided to block off two lanes of each highway as the high-speed zone. Thus leaving the remaining lane to regular traffic. It takes Susan more than twice as long to get to work, and when she arrives she discovers that many of her long term customers decided the wait was too long and took their business elsewhere.

But it's not just customers, her shipments too, subject to the same slow speed infrastructure take many times their normal delivery rate arriving days or weeks late.

"Alright!" Susan exclaims. "I will have to buy myself a speed pass, there is no other way for me to do business."

As she phones the roadway corporations for information, what she finds is beyond disheartening. Despite the assorted methods and plans they have for paying by company size, flat rate, or recurring payments the cost for a speed pass alone would bankrupt her. She simply does not have enough, and unless her business grew many times its size it would never be possible. Sadly she is steadily losing business, as products and consumers can neither arrive, nor depart from her store in a reasonable manner. She is forced to close her store.

This example is perhaps a bit silly at first read, comparing the digital to the physical always creates something of a confused metaphor to say the least! Internet Service Providers, of course, can assure you that bandwidth is not limited by physical space in the way that a roadway is, and that there is no reason for them to cut into existing speeds to create a fast lane. Unfortunately that, like many things, is downright false. Our providers, sadly refuse to innovate.

They make claims on one hand that consumers don't need faster speeds, that there is no demand to bring their connections into the 21st Century, but on the other clearly recognize that bandwidth is precious, and certain levels of usage are so great as to cause an economic burden worth of premium rates. While not so much a limitation of physical space, consider it a speed limit on a roadway. If you imagine a service provider's connection as a highway it may be infinitely broad, but there are aggressive speed limits.

Worse still, these speed limits are cumulative. Our online road has a maximum total speed limit, that is all of the cars on this road added together can only travel at X mph. If you designate one lane to be the fast lane, allowing cars in that lane to exceed one-hundred, or even two-hundred, miles per hour without issue, the value X still has not grown. The total speed of all the cars must still equal the same amount. The only way to accommodate this, the only way it works, is by causing the remaining cars to slow down - often considerably.

The only way for a fast lane to have no lasting effect on the overall web experience would be to build entirely new infrastructure, coast to coast, to support the fast lane traffic. I, for one, have concerns about where the funding for such a project would derive.

Another problem is innovation. This is harder to exhibit in our roadway metaphor, but the bandwidth requirements of each page are steadily growing. Imagine that each person's car has a minimum speed limit, and with each passing month that limit increases slightly, and that each month more and more drivers are using our online roadway. With this in mind you can easily see the steady progress towards X, and the disastrous impact without massive infrastructure upgrades.

From simple text pages, to small pictures, HD pictures, and multiple streaming HD videos your average web page is constantly increasing its data needs. Even if we can imagine a world where fast and slow lane designation does not affect the consumer today, can you guarantee it won't in five years? Ten years? What about the increase in the number of devices we have connected, and the increased data footprint of each generation?

If you were to consider demolishing Net Neutrality you would have to ensure that slow lane services aren't left in the technological dust as bandwidth requirements and infrastructure costs climb. You would have to hold accountable the companies who would surely upgrade their higher paying customers fast lane service before their lower paying customers on already laughably inadequate connections.

Will there be any incentive for ISPs to upgrade our service? They already think it is unnecessary while we, the United States, one of the great, most advanced, countries on the planet lag behind those we dismiss as underdeveloped. We lag behind countries like Romania, Lithuania, and Estonia in our connection speeds as is. Our speed is closer to Vietnam than Denmark, Mongolia than Macau. Why would you encourage anti-competitive behavior when honest heated competition is something we desperately need?

A lot of information is included in this post, because this topic is so deep that it is impossible to surmise effectively, while remaining comprehensive. I know full well that the majority of these comments will not be read, but if any thought is given to the opinion of the public I strongly hope that you reconsider your stance on Net Neutrality.

Thank you.