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Please classify internet as a telecommunications service and give users the protections of public utility classification. Net neutrality guarantees basic first amendment rights and equality of access, which the current pay for priority proposal would destroy.

Internet is an essential component of today's life. Last November, our entire county lost cell & 911 service; banks, markets and gas stations closed; and, all telephone service failed for a week to ten days depending on county location. A private, for-profit company's poor maintenance of its submarine cable caused this disruption. Another private company's efforts to help and patch service were declined. For some, it was catastrophe.

Open access to internet is key to success in today's world. Any privatization of this public resource deprives citizens of essential services, and can, as San Juan County experienced, be life-threatening. Please act to protect the public interest: declare broadband a public utility as it should have been in 2002; and, decline any proposals that allow those companies or individuals with money faster access than those without. Protect intellectual exchange, protect the right to criticize, question and participate in private and public forums, and protect scientific documentation and religious expression. In other words, protect evolving democracy. Thank you.