

There are two ways for broadband to be fair to consumers, and to become widely available. There is a truly free market, or a regulated market. Currently, we have neither. Cable companies have monopolistic control of their regions, and free reign to do just about anything they want. Not only is there no open market or real competition (in areas where there actually is 'competition,' the services offered are always subpar), but there is no regulation to control what these non competitive companies are capable of doing. The only innovation that has come out of any of these gargantuan corporations in recent years involves new ways of gouging consumers.

With data caps, spying on content accessed, and attempting to charge providers and consumers for the content accessed, and devising new systems to do this ever more efficiently, is truly the greatest innovation coming out of them. While this is not to scoff at the services they offer, which have improved, they are still far too expensive for the average consumer, and compared to the rest of the world, downright unbelievable. In general, they are also far, far subpar to those offered by companies in other nations, putting the US behind some very 'backwater' countries as far as quality of internet access goes. With ever increasing bandwidth consumption and real innovation coming from other companies which requires good quality internet service to function, this is only going to get worse in the future.

If we wish to have any legitimate standing in the global economy in the future, and not become a laughing stock known for its crumbling infrastructure and lack of investment in the future, we simply /must/ reclassify ISPs as common carriers. This is exactly the situation these laws were crafted to combat. Despite what has been said, it truly is history repeating itself. ISPs are indeed the phone monopoly of today. In fact, they occupy the same central importance that those companies once occupied. In many cases, they are the same companies, too.

It is essentially impossible to function in today's market as a business or as an individual without a reliable connection to the internet. It is simply essential to life today, and it is only going to become more so. So today we are left with a very important choice. We have to decide whether we are going to reclassify these companies, or at the very least, if that fails, do everything that is possible, by whatever means are available, to make sure these companies can't further abuse their customers. We literally have no choice of which company we use. We must either have competition, or regulation. We cannot continue on this course of doing nothing, and let things get worse!

How can it be that the United States, the nation that literally invented the internet, can have some of the most pathetic service offered in the developed world? There are former Soviet Bloc countries that put us to shame, quite frankly, in this department.

I know there are many ways you can take action. Title II Common Carrier reclassification is without doubt the most attractive option, but if that cannot be undertaken, at the very, very least, you must use whatever power you do have to either encourage competition, or to keep prices realistic, and prevent unfair gouging like data caps and protection racket-esque schemes like charging consumers and content providers at the same time.

Regardless, something must be done. The American People are sick and tired of being abused by these companies and being offered no choice by these companies which provide an essential utility. And yes, it is a utility. Just like water or electricity. We must make a choice, and we must make it now. Not doing anything is not an option, and making internet monopolies even stronger is certainly not an option. I know many people at the FCC have ties to this industry, and their money and lobbying power is considerable, but for once, please. Make a choice for the American People. We need this. And we need you. As we never have before.