

John Oliver: Our top story tonight concerns the Internet, aka the electronic cat database. But, but first let's just take a moment together and appreciate how amazing the Internet is. You can use it to file your taxes, apply for jobs. You can go online right now and buy a case of coyote urine.

Do you know how difficult it used to be to obtain coyote urine? You literally have to give a coyote Gatorade and just wait. It was a mess. The system was a mess. But if you've turned on the news lately. You may have heard some worrying references to the Internet. It's changing.

Male Reporter: The Federal Communications Commission has agreed to move forward on a proposal that could change the way we use the Internet. At risk, the basic principle of net neutrality.

Male Reporter: Net neutrality.

Female Reporter: Net neutrality.

John Oliver: Yes, net neutrality. The only two words that promise more boredom in the English language are featuring Sting and hearing people talking about it is somehow even worse.

Male Reporter: As anticipated, the notice proposes to ground the net neutrality rules in section 706 of the telecommunications act of 1996.

John Oliver: Oh my god, that is the most boring thing I've ever seen! That is even boring by C-Span standards. I would rather read a book on Thomas Freedman than sit through that hearing. I would rather listen to a pair of dockers telling me about the weird dream it had. I would rather sit down with my niece and watch Caillou, a children's show about a bored Canadian child who lives a life devoid of any incident. (bleep) you, Caillou! Grow some hair and leave the house! Find out what the world's about [sic]! Come on!

But here's the thing, net neutrality is actually hugely important. Essentially it means that all data, has to be treated equally, no matter who created it. It's why the Internet is a weirdly level playing field. Startups can supplant established brands. That's how Facebook supplanted Myspace, which supplanted Friendster, which supplanted actually having any friends.

Do you remember physically having friends? It was awful. You couldn't tap people's faces to make them go away. The point is, the Internet in its current form is not broken and the FCC is currently taking steps to fix that.

Male Reporter: The FCC is endorsing new rules that could clear the way for a two tier system.

Female Reporter: The rules would open the door for the first time for Internet providers like Comcast and Verizon to charge tech companies to send content to consumers more quickly. Netflix, for example, might pay a premium to insure that its customers can stream movies more reliably at a cost a startup competitor might not be able to afford.

John Oliver: No, this cannot happen. How else is my startup streaming video service, Nutflix, going to compete. It's going to be everyone's one-stop resource to watch videos of men getting hit in the nuts. You don't even know you want it yet. That's why it's brilliant.

Ending net neutrality would allow big companies to buy their way into the fast lane, leaving everyone else in the slow lane. Although, telephone companies would prefer if you put it in a slightly different way.

Male: When you say fast lane and slow lane, it's a good illustration. But what you really should be talking about is a fast lane for everybody and a hyper speed lane

for others.

John Oliver: Bullshit. If we let cable companies offer two speeds of service there wouldn't be a Usain Bolt and a Usain Bolt on a motor bike. They'd be Usain Bolt and Usain Bolt bolted onto an anchor. And telecom companies will say, they would never slow down a website's speed in order to get more money out of them but let me tell you a little story. Recently, Comcast was negotiating with Netflix. This graph shows Netflix download speeds on various providers. That black line plummeting downwards was their speed on Comcast during the negotiation. See if you can guess when Netflix agreed to Comcast demands. I'll give you a hint, it's right there.

That has all the ingredients of a mob shake down. Now Netflix, nice show about life in a ladies prison. Such a shame, if there was going to be something happen to your connection there. So frustrating that would be there. And it's not just anti-corporate hippies that think abandoning net neutrality is a bad idea.

Male Reporter: The net neutrality movement is leary of its big corporate leaders but in this debate, it's on the same side as some of them.

Male: Google, Facebook, Netflix, Amazon, all signed on to this letter supporting net neutrality.

John Oliver: What's being proposed is so egregious. Activists and corporations have been forced onto the same side. That's basically, Lex Luther knocking on Superman's apartment door and going, listen, I know we have our differences, but we have got to get rid of that asshole in apartment 3B. He's, he's too loud Supe, he's just too loud.

And you might wonder. Well, look, if everyone is against this, how is it even possibly happening? Well, consider who would benefit from this change? Cable companies. Verizon wants a two tier system so badly they sued the government to force their own change that's currently being discussed. These companies have Washington in their pockets to a conveniently, almost unbelievable degree.

Male Reporter: Comcast has spent \$18,810,000 in lobbying last year. That's more than any other company except for defense contractors Northrup Grumman.

John Oliver: So, just to be clear. The ranking of who buys government influence is number one, military complex and number two, the provider of Lizard Lick Towing.

Look, I could show you the troubling cozy relationship between cable companies and Washington in any number of ways. I could show you the president golfing with the CEO of Comcast or sitting at a fundraiser at a cable executive's house that he had been there so many times the only thing I haven't done in this house is have seder dinner. But perhaps, the most succinct way is this.

Male Reporter: The president has picked Tom Wheeler, a former top lobbyist for cable and wireless companies to be the next chair of the federal communications commission.

John Oliver: Yes, the guy who used to run the cable industry's lobbying arm is now running the agency's tasks with regulating it. That is the equivalent of needing a babysitter and hiring a Dingo. Here, thanks for stopping over. Make sure, make sure they're in bed by eight. There's 20 bucks on the table for kibbles so, uh, please don't eat my baby.

With the facts, they are practically overseeing they're own oversight. It is hardly surprising that cable companies are basically monopolies now. A federal study found that 96% of the population had access to two or fewer cable broadband providers.

It's almost as if they've agreed to stay out of each other's way, like drug cartels. Hold on, hold on, that's not fair. I mean, if hypothetically, a cable company like Comcast, were planning to merge with a company like, let's say, Time Warner. It's

not like their CEO would sit down and mark out who had which turf? Right?

Male: But in video and in broadband we don't compete with Time Warner. You have to start with that very fundamental point. They're in New York, we're in Philadelphia. They're in L.A., we're in San Francisco. You can't buy a Comcast in New York. You can't buy a Time Warner in Philadelphia. So there's no reduction in competition.

John Oliver: Exactly. You can't reduce competition when nobody is competing. You could not be describing a monopoly more clearly if you were wearing a metal top hat while driving a metal car after winning second prize in a beauty contest. Maybe it's because of their lack of competition they get away with providing such shitty service.

We pay more for our Internet service than almost anybody else on earth and yet the download speeds we get lag behind Estonia. Estonia, a country where, from the looks of it, they still worry about Shrek attacks.

Is it any wonder? That in a massive recent customer satisfaction surveys. Comcast and Time Warner cable came in dead last. And when you look at the companies that scored better than them. People were basically saying, yes, Bank of America took away my home. Yes, Taco Bell gave me diarrhea, and, sure, GM tried to kill me, but Time Warner and Comcast are the worst. They are the worst.

And now I know the cable companies will say, oh, they support net neutrality protections or they remain committed to the open Internet or just the tip. But let me remind you. They also say they'll be at your house between two and six in the afternoon and does any part of you really expect them to (bleep) turn up.

And, yet, our government looks set to end net neutrality and let these companies run hog wild and we're just going to let them and you know why? It all comes down to this.

Male Reporter: It seeks comment on ways to construe additional languages in section 706 and even suggests using section 230b to broaden the scope of the commissions who served authority.

John Oliver: Oh my god! How are you still so dull? And that's the problem. The cable companies have figured out the great truth of America. If you want to do something evil, put it inside something boring.

Apple could put the entire text of Mein Kampf inside the iTunes user agreement and you'd just go, "Agree, agree, agree. What? Agree, agree." And that why advocates should not be talking about protecting net neutrality. They shouldn't even use that phrase. They should call it preventing cable company (bleep) because that is what it is. And it might want to compel people to want to do something. And this interesting thing here is there might actually be something you can still do. Female Reporter: The FCC will be taking public comment for 120 days.

John Oliver: That's right. The FCC are literally inviting Internet comments at this address. And at this point, and I can't believe I'm about to do this. I would like to address the Internet commenters out there directly.

Good evening, monsters, this may be the moment you've spent your whole life training for. You've been out there ferociously commenting on dance videos of adorable three-year-olds saying things like, "Every child could dance like this little loser after one week of practice." Or you've been polluting Frozen's "Let it Go" with comments like ice castle would give her hypothermia and she dead in an hour.

Or, and you know you've done this one, commenting on a video of this show, (bleep) this asshole anchor, go suck your president's (bleep), you're just friends with the terrorists.

Now, I don't know what any of that means, but I don't think this it's a compliment.

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But this is the moment you were made for commenters. Like, Ralph Maccio, you've been honing your skills waxing cars and painting fences. Well, now it's time to do some (bleep) karate.

For once in your life, we need you to channel that anger, that badly spelled boil that you normally reserve for unforgivable acts on actresses that you seem to think have put on weight.

Or politicians that you disagree with or photos of your ex-girlfriend getting on with her life or nonwhite actors being cast as fictional characters. And I'm talking to you Ron Paul fan 2016. And you, One Direction forever. And I'm talking to you, One Direction sucks balls.

We need you to get out there and for once in your lives focus your indiscriminate rage in a useful direction! Seize your moments my lovely trolls. Turn on caps lock and fly my pretties! Fly, fly, fly!