

Dear FCC,

My name is Kathryn Lee Martin and I live in Newville, PA.

Net neutrality, the principle that Internet service providers (ISPs) treat all data that travels over their networks equally, is important to me because without it ISPs could have too much power to determine my Internet experience by providing better access to some services but not others.

A pay-to-play Internet worries me because ISPs could act as the gatekeepers to their subscribers.

As a writer in a rapidly digitizing publishing world, the concept of "monopolizing" the internet by giving ISPs too much power via the pay to play manner greatly concerns me. I live in rural Pennsylvania, so access to the internet is sketchy enough as it is and broadband is already monopolized by one provider here. The fact that the internet itself would become that way without net neutrality is worrisome because it allows less resources being available for the general public as we would be unable to afford the higher costs being passed onto the consumer. (Many of us Americans are struggling as it is to put food on the table and keep our homes out of foreclosure, so slowing down what we already pay for will make people like me less likely to even support the economy itself because it would eliminate buying anything online altogether and likely lead to us giving up internet entirely since it will be considered a waste of money at that point and a luxury that can be cut safely from the budget.)

We also will be less likely to keep anything more than a small land line for phone service because none of us in this household have smartphones and are not willing to even consider investing in them or any other internet requiring technology because the internet would be useless with all the power in the ISPs hands. Why pay for what you cannot even use but once could at that point?

It also makes it far more difficult for aspiring writers and artists to get their work out there because of the slow down. It's tough enough as it is for the creative types to establish careers in this day and age. Why should only the "privileged" few have the opportunity to contribute to America's culture?

No one wants to wait three hours to download an e-book or wait for a digital painting to load on a website. And if people cannot access goods to purchase, then you are stealing from the person who may have made a sale and aided in the economic recovery. Because if they can't make a sale the "right way" then they are not contributing overall to things like taxes and businesses will be more likely to fail because they cannot afford to compete. And with all of the power in the hands of the ISPs without Net Neutrality, you are likely going to cripple innocent people who cannot afford what they once could or maybe even would have possibly started the next Apple, Microsoft, even the next Netflix because they couldn't compete with a legal, government sponsored monopoly. It will also stifle things like online multi-player games, social media, and anything else that connects people across the country. And for writers and artists, and just about any business in this day and age, that will prove devastating overall.

Small businesses. Students. People who desire to skype it up with family they haven't talked to face to face in years and cannot visit. Writers. Musicians. Artists. With the ISPs controlling the internet without Net Neutrality, all of these things could vanish forever, leaving just another wannabe "advanced" country in its wake pretending to be the land of the "free" and the home of whatever can afford to be classified as "brave." I strongly hope that it never comes to the point where this great country trades its freedom for outright greed. Please save Net Neutrality. For not only me and every other person with a dream, be it writing the next great American novel, being the next great painter, selling out concerts, starting that next great American small business, and everyone with ideas that have yet to be realized.

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Sincerely,
Kathryn Lee Martin