



NEWS

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See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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**STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS ON THE
ANNOUNCEMENT BY CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI OF HIS INTENT TO
LAUNCH AN INTERNET FREEDOM PROCEEDING**

The Internet was born and thrived on openness. Keeping it open as some players amass the power for gatekeeper control is essential. The FCC's Statement of Four Internet Principles that we won in 2005 was the initial down-payment toward that objective. Chairman Genachowski's bold announcement today is a significant further investment in safeguarding Internet Freedom. I salute him for it.

Broadband users should be able to use any device or application they want, to reach any legal content they wish, using any broadband technology, so long as they don't cause harm to the network. Some rules of the road and a venue for enforcing them are required to make this vision reality. This is why I have long advocated an enforceable principle of non-discrimination, ensuring that product and service providers understand the difference between advancing and short-circuiting Internet Freedom. And the venue with the expertise to adjudicate claims of alleged discrimination, and with the authority to enforce the principle, is the FCC.

The Chairman's statement also rightly accords high priority to transparency for consumers. Users have a right to know how the network is being managed and what practices providers are employing. A sixth principle of transparency is therefore not just good--but essential--policy.

Certainly a well-considered Internet Freedom approach will take into account what constitutes reasonable network management practices; how evolutionary and revolutionary changes can alter the landscape and even change the guidelines on what is or is not acceptable; and solicit the input of all stakeholders--consumers, innovators, technologists and entrepreneurs. Internet Freedom is part-and-parcel of bringing the wonders of Twenty-first century telecommunications to each and every American. Today's announcement is a significant stride toward realization of this vision.