

December 12, 2017

The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
45 12th St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Pai:

We write to oppose the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)'s plan to repeal Title II protection for net neutrality. The recently circulated order would leave Internet users entirely without protections, jeopardizing free speech and our thriving Internet economy. Your plan is an arbitrary and capricious reversal of a law that has been upheld by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, and enjoyed broad bipartisan support outside of Washington. Under the legal framework governing your agency, Title II is the best, most flexible, and indeed the only authority for protecting the open Internet. Undoing these protections will benefit only the largest Internet service providers (ISPs) at the expense of the rest of our country.

Under the existing net neutrality regulations passed by the FCC in 2015, clear, bright-line rules prevent phone and cable companies from engaging in harmful behavior. Additional strong and flexible consumer protections currently prevent ISPs from interfering with Internet traffic. Under this most recent proposed rule, all of these protections are removed, leaving only meager transparency rules in place.

This proposal leaves Internet users vulnerable to harmful conduct by ISPs, and indicates that the FCC trusts Internet service providers not to exploit their customers. Before the 2015 open Internet order, phone and Internet providers throttled access to websites, blocked content, and rigged the market in their favor.ⁱ We believe that without net neutrality in place, ISPs will almost certainly revert to their old conduct.

Under the solid legal footing of Title II, the Internet has remained open for competition, innovation and creativity. Broadband investment has continued apace and Internet service provider revenues have continued to grow since the Commission issued its landmark decision in 2015. The argument that net neutrality is bad for business is false.ⁱⁱ

Allowing providers to charge websites and application makers more for "fast lanes" for online traffic would give an unfair advantage to wealthy people and entrenched interests, and burden the rest of us with a slower Internet. It would create barriers for the web entrepreneurs, innovators and activists who have great ideas, but wouldn't be able to compete on a pay-to-play Internet.

Most importantly, strong net neutrality rules have worked to keep the Internet free from discrimination against users, regardless of their race or economic status. If Title II protections are voted away on December 14, access to the Internet could be stymied for marginalized groups and activists.

We write to express our strong opposition to the FCC's proposal to abdicate its responsibility under law to uphold Title II of the Communications Act. Voting to undo Title II protection for broadband Internet will leave consumers vulnerable to exploitation by ISPs, hinder innovation and free expression, and allow for discrimination against marginalized communities and activists. For these reasons, we urge the commission to not vote for this proposed rule on December 14, 2017.

Sincerely,



Keith Ellison
Vice Chair
Congressional Progressive Caucus



Raul M. Grijalva
Co-chair
Congressional Progressive Caucus



Mark Pocan
Co-chair
Congressional Progressive Caucus



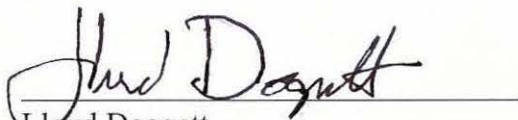
Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



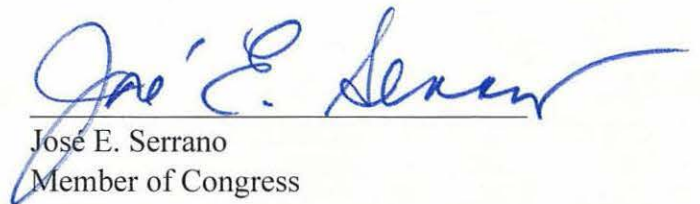
Grace F. Napolitano
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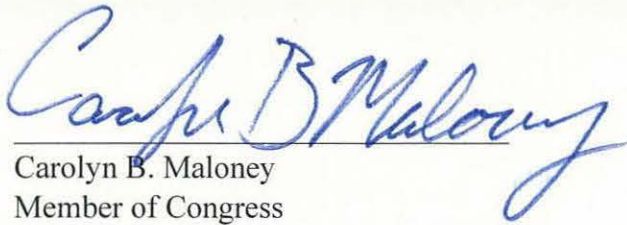
Peter A. DeFazio
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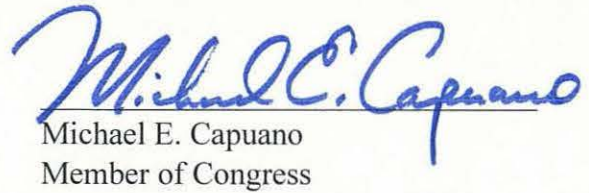


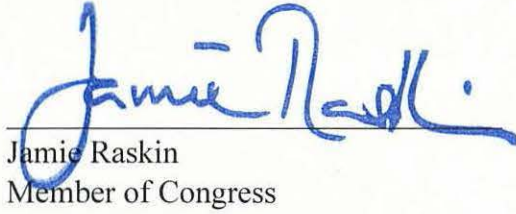
Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress

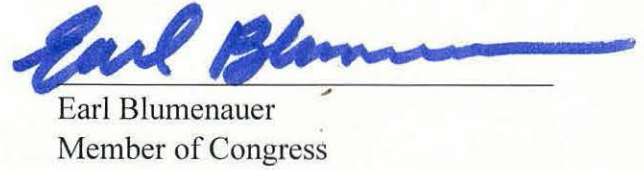


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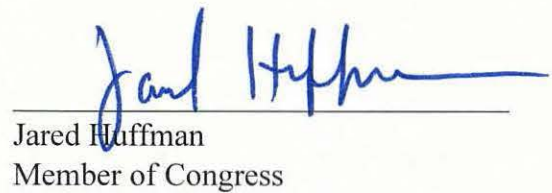

Jamie Raskin
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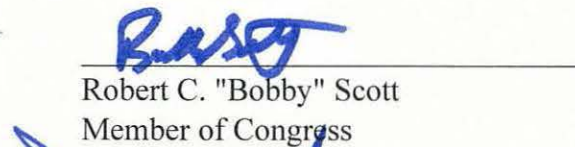

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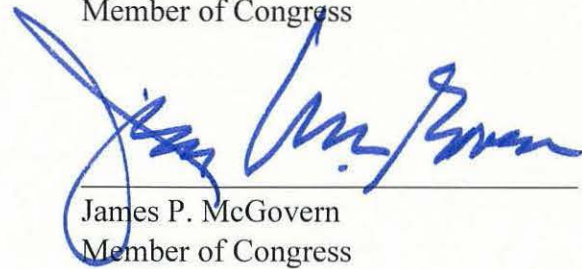

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

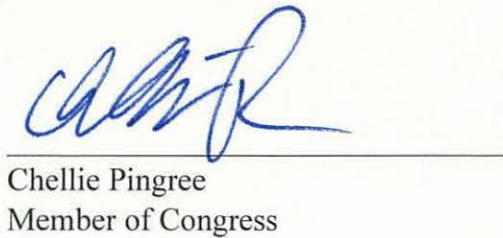

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Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
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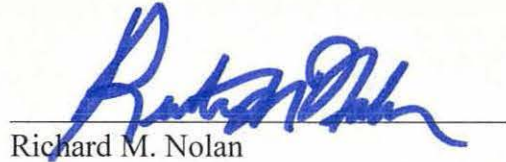

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Michelle Lujan Grisham
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Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

i <https://www.freepress.net/blog/2017/04/25/net-neutrality-violations-brief-history>

ii <http://www.businessinsider.com/fccs-claim-that-broadband-investment-has-dropped-is-flawed-2017-11>