

**Media Contact:**

MediaRelations@fcc.gov

## **Five Facts About Net Neutrality Protections**

*“We need broadband to reach 100 percent of us—and we need it fast, open, and fair.”  
-Jessica Rosenworcel, FCC Chairwoman*

A devastating pandemic reaffirmed the essential nature of broadband access to protect the health and economic security of all people living in the United States. But in 2017, the nation’s expert communications regulator gave up its oversight authority over broadband. Now, in 2024, the FCC is [poised](#) to restore federal broadband service oversight and net neutrality rules.

Here are five reasons why we need these protections restored and why the FCC’s proposed Title II reclassification brings back its ability to provide necessary oversight to this essential service:

- 1. RETURN OF POPULAR, COURT-TESTED NET NEUTRALITY PROTECTIONS** – The FCC would once again prevent broadband service providers from blocking traffic, slowing down content, or creating pay-to-play internet fast lanes. The FCC will be voting on rules that were upheld in full by the court in 2016.
- 2. PROVIDE OVERSIGHT OF BROADBAND OUTAGES** – When households and businesses lose internet service, consumers often expect the FCC might either be able to help in the restoration or at least have information about the outage. By restoring the FCC’s Title II authority over internet service providers, the FCC will bolster its ability to require these companies to address internet outages.
- 3. BOOST SECURITY OF BROADBAND NETWORKS** – Without reclassification of broadband, the FCC is limited in its authority to direct foreign-owned companies deemed to be national security threats to discontinue any domestic or international broadband services – as the agency has done with telephone services.
  - Our [federal agency partners](#) have also backed the need to address these national security concerns and have said because of the repeal of Title II, “The Commission has encountered challenges that have hampered its ability to fully protect the public from serious national security threats.”
  - Notably, in 2021 and 2022, the Commission revoked the authority of certain foreign-owned network service providers to provide voice service in the United States on the grounds that they presented threats to national security, but that revocation did not extend to any broadband service those providers may offer in the U.S.
  - The Commission observed that these providers’ presence in the United States gave them the opportunity to access U.S. telecommunications infrastructure, access U.S. customer records, monitor communications, disrupt communications, misroute communications, and facilitate espionage. Yet having identified these threats, the Commission had limited ability to act.
- 4. BROADBAND PROVIDER OVERSIGHT, NOT CONTROL** – The FCC has no authority to, and no interest in, policing online speech. On the contrary, freedom of speech will be enhanced by open internet protections, because they will prevent broadband providers from blocking or disfavoring any type of online speech.

5. **‘BIG TECH’ IS AN IMPORTANT BUT UNRELATED POLICY CHALLENGE –** Treating broadband as the essential service it is does not in any way limit policy options related to internet-age companies that the public and Capitol Hill often collectively refer to as “Big Tech.” Certainly, there may be a need for closer oversight of “Big Tech” – but the Communications Act does not grant such authority to the FCC. In addition, net neutrality is important so that the small and medium-sized companies that are trying to compete with more established companies have a level playing field, and net neutrality would ensure that “Big Tech” can’t just cut a deal with a broadband provider to favor its products over upstart competitors.

###

**Released: April 24, 2024**

**Office of the Chairwoman: (202) 418-2400 / [www.fcc.gov/jessica-rosenworcel](http://www.fcc.gov/jessica-rosenworcel)**

*This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.  
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).*