

December 12, 2017

The Honorable John Thune
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chairman
Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Thune, Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Nelson, and Ranking Member Pallone:

A free and open internet is vital to core American values. It affects the freedom to share our thoughts and opinions freely, the ability to organize, and the opportunity to innovate and create. The principle of net neutrality – that all data on the internet should be treated equally, and internet service providers (ISPs) should not discriminate or provide preference to any data, regardless of its source, content, or destination – is what has made the internet the great engine of free expression, organizing, and economic opportunity that it is today.

Unfortunately, a radical draft order proposed by Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Ajit Pai would silence everyone's voices and dismantle Americans' freedoms by rolling back rules that protect net neutrality, giving companies free rein to dismantle the open internet. This proposed order would allow ISPs to control what individuals see and do on the internet without strong oversight for consumers. It departs from 15 years of bipartisan agreement from FCC chairs that the agency has both the authority and the responsibility to protect consumers and competition in the broadband marketplace. This is nothing more than an attack on the rights and freedoms of all Americans, and a gift to already powerful corporations. It is especially damaging to individuals and communities that have historically struggled to share their stories.

The current FCC rules—established in 2015 with the *Open Internet Order* and upheld in court—protect freedom of expression and an open marketplace for businesses to compete, free of interference from ISPs. These open internet protections are tremendously popular. They are supported by almost 80 percent of Americans in recent polling and also by millions of Americans who commented to the FCC and

called Congress to keep the rules in place. Since the 2015 net neutrality protections were adopted, we have seen continued innovation on the internet and increasing revenues and investments from ISPs. Under a free and open internet, everyone wins.

In his proposed order, Chairman Pai removes even the most basic protections for all content to be treated equally online. If the order passes on December 14, ISPs will be able to slow down or even block the content of websites for any reason, stifling free speech and skewing the marketplace.

Despite his rhetoric, since becoming chairman, Pai has steadily stood on the side of big companies and made it harder for all Americans to have access to a free and open internet, and created new obstacles for Americans to connect and communicate. He has set out to not only repeal net neutrality, but to cut aid to families in low-income communities in an assault on Lifeline. Under Pai's new policies, the digital divide will only deepen, innovative new businesses will struggle to compete, and the voices of millions will be silenced.

With the vote scheduled for December 14, we strongly urge Congress to stand up for the communities you serve by protecting net neutrality. Tell the FCC to pull the vote for this proposed order. A free and open internet protects a free and open society for all Americans—regardless of race, gender, faith, ability or disability, or socioeconomic status. These values are what make us Americans. We urge you to fight for your communities and our society.

We, the undersigned organizations, representing a diverse group of consumer, media, technology, library, arts, civil liberties, and civil rights advocates, artists, and musicians, urge you and your colleagues to support the current net neutrality rules in place, and tell the FCC to stop its proposed plan to end them.

Sincerely,

18MillionRising.org
A Herr Smith & EE Smith Library
Abel J. Morneault Memorial Library
Access Humboldt
Access Now
Access Sonoma Broadband
ADAPT Montana
Akaku Maui Community Media
Alice James Books
Allied Media Projects
Alternate ROOTS
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Civil Liberties Union
American Library Association
Appalshop, Inc.
Arts & Democracy
Association of College and Research Libraries
Association of Research Libraries
Association of University Presses
Barclay Public Library District

Black Women's Health Imperative
Boston Library Consortium
Butte Public Library
BYP100
Cahokia Public Library
Campaign for Youth Justice
Carlinville Public Library
CASH Music
CCTV Center for Media and Democracy
Center for Democracy & Technology
Center for Media Justice
Center for Rural Strategies
Center for Social Inclusion
Central Community High School #71
Charleston Carnegie Public Library
Clarke University
Coalition of Religious Publishing Associations
Color Of Change
Common Cause
Common Frequency
Courage Campaign
CreaTV San Jose
Daily Kos
Dayton Public Library
Defending Rights & Dissent
Demand Progress
Dignity and Power Now
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
Electronic Frontier Foundation
Ella Baker Center for Human Rights
Engine
EveryLibrary
Faithful Internet
Fight for the Future
Forward Together
Frank Bertetti Benld Public Library
FREE Families Rally for Emancipation and Empowerment
Free Press Action Fund
Free Speech Coalition
Friends of the Earth
Future of Music Coalition
Galatia Public Library
Garrard Co Public Library
Girl Friday
Global Action Project
Government Information Watch
Harristown Public Library District
Hawarden Public Library

HealthHIV
Hollaback!
Homeowners Against Deficient Dwellings
Hope Welty Public Library
Illinois Heartland Library System
Illinois Library Association
Institute for Local Self-Reliance
International Documentary Association
Iowa Library Association
Iraq Veterans Against the War
Kingdom Access TV
LeadingAge
LitNet - The Literary Network
Mahomet Public Library District
Maine Library Association
Marion Carnegie Library
Martinez Street Women's Center
Mason City Public Library District
May First/People Link
Media Access Project
Media Action Center
Media Alliance
Media Mobilizing Project
Memorial Health System Professional Library
Michigan Library Association
Minnesota Library Association
Mississippi Valley Library District
Mobile Beacon
NARAL Pro-Choice America
Nashville Public Library
National Association of Consumer Advocates
National Coalition Against Censorship
National Coalition for LGBT Health
National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of its low-income clients
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National Juvenile Justice Network
National Organization for Women
Native Public Media
New America's Open Technology Institute
New Mexico Library Association
New Progressive Alliance
Oakland Privacy
Online Policy Group
Open Access Connections
Open MIC (Open Media and Information Companies Initiative)
OpenMedia
Oregon State University Libraries & Press
Orinda Progressive Action Alliance

PEN America
People Demanding Action
Popular Resistance
Progressive Technology Project
Prometheus Radio Project
Public Citizen
Public Justice Center
Public Knowledge
Race Forward
Rick Warren Memorial Public Library District
Rights4Girls
Robinson High School Library
RootsAction.org
RYSE Youth Center
Savvy System Designs
Smithton Public Library District
Society of American Archivists
Somos Un Pueblo Unido
South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce
Southwest Organizing Project
St. Ambrose University Library
St. Paul Neighborhood Network
Stinson Memorial Public Library District
The Authors Guild
The Greenlining Institute
The Harry Potter Alliance
The People's Press Project
The Tully Center for Free Speech
Tri-City Public Library
United Church of Christ, OC Inc.
United Plant Savers
United Spinal Association
Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center
Venice Public Library
Voqal
Wedsworth Memorial Library
WFNU Frogtown Community Radio
Williamsburg (Iowa) Public Library
Women In Media & News
Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press
Women's Media Center
Woodhull Freedom Foundation
World Wide Web Foundation
Worthington Libraries
Writers Guild of America West
Young Women United