

The Case for Modern Net Neutrality Legislation

AMERICA LEADS ON BROADBAND INVESTMENT

\$86 BILLION

ANNUAL 2021 INVESTMENT FROM PRIVATE BROADBAND COMPANIES

\$42.5B

HISTORIC FOUR-YEAR PUBLIC COMMITMENT IN THE FEDERAL BEAD PROGRAM

OUR TAKE

Broadband companies have long practiced net neutrality and do not block, throttle or unfairly prioritize content. We support legislation that codifies into law open internet protections across consumers' online experience. This requires modern rules that apply not only to broadband, but also to online commerce, search, social media and other areas where significant real-world neutrality concerns have emerged. Reinstating decades-old telephone regulations will not protect consumers across their online experience. Modern rules that address the entirety of today's digital marketplace can, while also safeguarding our innovation economy. Amid rising consumer costs and economic stress, broadband is a major success story—with record private sector investment and consumer pricing trends that run counter to inflation. Turning back the clock to policies that pre-date the internet could reverse this progress and degrade consumers' online experience. Only modern net neutrality rules can deliver the full protections all consumers deserve.

America's broadband providers support modern legislation that delivers consistent protections to consumers across their online experience.

KEY POINTS

► Broadband Companies Support MODERN Legislation

Consumers have waited far too long for Congress to step up and codify for the entire internet the neutrality principles broadband providers already follow. But any such legislation must look forward, not backward. Reinstating old regulations would grant the government sweeping powers that would degrade consumers' online experience and threaten U.S. competitiveness.

► Net Neutrality Principles Should Apply Across the Internet

The regulations this bill seeks to reinstate pre-date the internet. Thus, the rules do not apply to dominant online platforms—from search to social media to shopping—where Americans have real-world concerns about neutrality. Consumers deserve equitable protections across their online experience.

► Broadband is a Bright Spot for Consumers, Economy

Today's consumers benefit from a thriving, open and dynamic internet, complete with countless choices and low-cost options. Last year alone, broadband providers invested \$86 billion into U.S. network infrastructure, the highest level in 20 years.

OVER THE
LAST YEAR,
U.S. INFLATION
ROSE AT

3.5X

THE RATE OF
BROADBAND PRICES
June 2021-June 2022, BLS

► **U.S. Innovation Policy Helps Power This Success Story**

Significant credit for our nation's broadband strength is due to U.S. innovation policy which emphasizes constructive engagement between the public and private sectors—protecting consumers while advancing investment and innovation. This approach helped give rise to U.S. leadership of the global information economy, encouraged roughly \$2 trillion in private investment in resilient networks that got our nation through the pandemic, and if these policies are not reversed—will help drive our economic recovery and future opportunities for a fully connected country.

► **Reclassifying Broadband = Dramatic Reversal**

If reaching back to the distant past for regulatory authority doesn't protect consumers from new online platforms and only governs companies that already practice net neutrality, then what does this retro approach achieve? It reclassifies broadband as an old-fashioned utility. This grants the government broad powers to regulate many aspects of consumers' broadband service in ways that would hinder their online experience, slow investment and stifle competition.

► **Only Congress Can Deliver a Modern Approach**

The FCC has been playing ping pong with this issue for 15+ years, moving in and out of the courts and cycling through Democratic and Republican leadership. Only Congress can deliver certainty. A modern statute should focus on securing open internet principles across the connected world—without granting government broad powers over virtually all aspects of consumers' online experience.

BOTTOM LINE

- **Only modern legislation can protect consumers across their online experience while promoting U.S. infrastructure investment and our innovation economy.**
- **Resuscitating rules from the pre-internet past is no way to govern our nation's connected future.**

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