



Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. SW
Washington D.C., 20554

February 18, 2015

Dear Commissioners,

We are the “small, independent businesses and entrepreneurs” that Commissioner Pai referenced in his February 6, 2015 press release about the FCC’s impending net neutrality rulemaking, and we write to say unequivocally that his release does not represent our views on net neutrality. Quite the opposite, entrepreneurs and startups throughout the country have consistently supported Chairman Wheeler’s call for strong net neutrality rules enacted through Title II.

For today’s entrepreneurs and startups, failure to protect an open Internet represents an existential threat. Because net neutrality is such an important issue, the startup community has been engaged in the Commission’s Open Internet proceeding to an unprecedented degree. The clear, resounding message from our community has been that Title II with appropriate forbearance is the only path the FCC can take to protect the open Internet. Any claim that a net neutrality plan based in Title II would somehow burden “small, independent businesses and entrepreneurs with heavy-handed regulations that will push them out of the market” is simply not true. The threat of ISPs abusing their gatekeeper power to impose tolls and discriminate against competitive companies is the real threat to our future.

Contrary to any unsupported claims otherwise, we believe that the outlined proposal that the Chairman circulated last week will encourage competition and innovation by preventing ISPs from using their gatekeeper power to distort the Internet market for their own private benefit. A vibrant Internet economy depends on an open playing field in which small, innovative entrepreneurs can compete with incumbents on the quality of their services, not on the size of their checkbook or their roster of lobbyists. In *Verizon v. FCC*, the DC Circuit stated in no uncertain terms that, without reclassifying broadband under Title II, the FCC cannot impose the bright-line bans on ISP discrimination that startups need to compete. As such, any plan that does not include Title II reclassification cannot support strong net neutrality rules. We are pleased that Chairman Wheeler has recognized this simple reality.

Chairman Wheeler’s plan is the best proposal we have seen to date for protecting the open Internet. While there are important details yet to be finalized, the substance of the rules that the Chairman circulated last week are encouraging. Any attempt to undermine the Chairman’s proposal through obfuscation and innuendo is not productive, and certainly does not represent the opinion of the startups and entrepreneurs that have worked so hard to make the Internet great.

Sincerely,

Automattic
Dwolla
Etsy
Foursquare Labs, Inc.
GitHub
AgSmarts Inc.
Akorn Entertainment
AnalyticsMD
Angaza Designb
Are You a Human
Asensei
Authentise Inc.
Bento
Big Brothers Advice
Bigger Markets
Blu Zone
Borneo
BoxJelly
Bright Funds
Capitol Bells
Cheezburger
CitiQuants Corporation
CoCo
CodeHS
CoinPrices.io
Coolhouse Labs
CoreTCS
CrowdCover
Development Seed
DigiSoy Technologies
Distinc.tt
Duffy
eDivv, Inc.
Embed.ly, Inc.
Engage Colorado
Estate Map
Ethical SEO Consulting
Evol8tion
Fonebook

Imgur
Kickstarter
Tumblr
Yelp
Global Accelerator Network
Graph Story
Gravity
Gun.io
H-Farm
Happy Life Essentials
Hattery
JumpCloud
Kapuno Communities
Keen IO
LaunchTN
Lean Team Tuning
LightsOn Web Solutions
Localwells
Makai Software
MakersTour.com
Mapbox
Meetup
Modernrepo
Modria.com, Inc.
Newco Patform
Next Big Sound
Nocturnal Coding Monkeys
Notion
NourishWise
OneFire, Inc.
Overhead.fm, Inc.
PadMapper
PalateHome
Patch of Land
Plickers
Proto Venture Technology
Rachio
Ramen
Reality Crowd TV Media
Reinventors Network

Rockstar Digital
Rollbar
Safe-Xchange
Seed Sumo
Shapeways
SimPolaris
Sonic
Sphero
Sportsfeed
Start Co.
Sunshine
SunStyle
Survature, Inc.
Talko
TeamSnap
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