VOICES FOR INTERNET FREEDOM

COMMENT SUMMARY

100+
STORIES OF
PEOPLE OF COLOR
HIGHLIGHTED

PRESERVING THE CURRENT NET NEUTRALITY RULES IS CRITICAL TO PEOPLE OF COLOR

50+ FREE EXPRESSION STORIES
59 ORGANIZATIONS SIGNED ON
20+ CIVIC ENGAGEMENT STORIES
20+ ACTIVIST STORIES
10+ ENTREPRENEUR STORIES
PEOPLE, NOT ISPS, SHOULD CONTROL OUR OWN INTERNET EXPERIENCES

Why Do We Need Net Neutrality?

An open Internet has enabled people of color to bypass traditional media avenues replete with insurmountable barriers to entry and institutional and structural discrimination. It creates a level playing field for people of color to thrive whether as entrepreneurs, activists, storytellers, or creators, or with essentials like housing, healthcare, education, and careers.

Is Maintaining Title II Necessary?

Yes. Title II is critical to the provision of stand-alone Lifeline broadband service. Many people of color and low-income people struggle with accessing the Internet, something essential in our society, and Lifeline helps bridge that digital divide.

Currently, the FCC has unambiguous authority to protect consumer privacy, something a majority of Americans are concerned about. Since Congress repealed the CRA, people are worried now more than ever.

This authority also provides a clear path for healthcare providers to deliver services in innovative ways to people of color and rural communities.

Does the Open Internet Order Help Consumers?

Yes. Since the Order passed in June 2015, there have been over 47,000 consumer complaints. These complaints involve Internet Service Providers violating the Order’s no blocking, no throttling, and no paid prioritization rules. These complaints show that the rules are necessary to protect consumers from their ISPs taking advantage of them. The Order also established the ombudsperson role, someone who assists consumers with their complaints and questions.

Should the Rules Apply to Mobile Networks?

Yes. Repealing mobile parity would exacerbate the digital divide and result in separate and unequal Internet experiences for people of color and low-income people, who rely disproportionately on mobile services as their only Internet access points. Mobile parity helps mitigate second-class digital citizenship. In an increasingly digital world, it is essential for families to access the Internet any way they can.

Although mobile-only access is not ideal, it is better than no access. We must keep the current rules in place to ensure people of color and low-income people do not lag behind even further.
THE OPEN INTERNET IS A GAME-CHANGER IN OUR HISTORIC STRUGGLE FOR EQUITY

“The Internet and social media was the catalyst for being able to continue to tell our story, to talk about Jordan, it elevated our story because we know disproportionately within our own communities these tragedies are happening all the time. [...] Had it not been for that, slowly but surely our story would’ve died. [...] Had it not been for those mediums where a lot of movement building is done, we would not have been able to create the movement for gun violence prevention. It’s extremely important, it’s critical.”

- Lucy McBath, mother of Jordan Davis & National Spokeswoman for Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America

“How can we expect students to grow up in a world, be citizens of our communities and do great things, when there is literally no connectivity, no access for them to complete their work...It’s as basic as they can’t do what is required of them.”

- Melissa Baranic, Fifth Grade Teacher in LA

“[Our podcast, #GoodMuslimBadMuslim] allows us to work outside of mainstream media, outside of corporate structures of what media’s supposed to be, and we’re able to create our own voice in our own Do-It-Yourself way.”

- Taz Ahmed, Blogger, Campaign Strategist at 18 Million Rising, & Co-Creator of #GoodMuslimBadMuslim