



THE FCC MUST ACT WITHOUT DELAY TO PROTECT INTERNET USERS AND VIDEO CHOICE

In the 21st century, communities of color face new threats with a very old history: from racially-biased surveillance to the exclusion of voices of color from the video marketplace. To protect the nation's most vulnerable consumers and ensure the strength of racial justice movements that rely on online tools, the FCC must move forward on three urgent and vital opportunities. The FCC must act to protect internet privacy, decrease cable and satellite TV bills while giving consumers more choices and opening opportunities for creators of color, and promote affordable access to the entire internet by steering internet service providers away from data caps and forbidding zero-rated plans that violate Net Neutrality.

THE FCC SHOULD PROTECT OUR PRIVACY ON THE INTERNET FROM BROADBAND PROVIDERS.

68% of internet users [believe](#) current laws do not sufficiently protect people's online privacy and 64% believe the government should do more to regulate advertisers' stewardship of our personal data. Yet no rule exists to give us more control over how internet service providers (ISPs) like Comcast, AT&T and Verizon use and share our personal data.

The FCC should require that ISPs:

- Notify us about what kind of information they collect about us;
- Explain why and how they use and share our information;
- Identify the types of entities with whom they share our information;
- Ask for our permission before they share or use our personal information;
- Make their best efforts to protect our personal information from data breaches;
- Promptly notify us and the relevant authorities when data breaches occur; and
- Ensure that privacy information is provided to limited-English proficient customers in their preferred languages.

The FCC should prevent ISPs from:

- Conditioning service on whether we allow them to use and share information; and
- Forcing us to pay more for private connections.

THE FCC SHOULD INCREASE OUR CABLE AND SATELLITE TV CHOICES AND REDUCE PRICES.

Many cable and satellite ("MVPD") customers are [frustrated](#) by the cost and complexity of our bills, and many are [dropping](#) these services or never signing up in the first place due to prohibitive prices. Poor people are far less likely to subscribe to cable or satellite TV than wealthy and middle class people. Factors such as cost and the limited amount of culturally-relevant content are simultaneously driving communities of color to consume [more](#) digital video than the general public. Upending the set-top box market would reduce subscription prices by hundreds of dollars per year and bring more relevant digital video content to all consumers.

To reduce cost, provide choice, and open up opportunities for emerging independent and diverse programmers to access a larger audience, the FCC should:

- Adopt effective rules to give us a choice about how we access MVPD programming on any device, right alongside “over-the-top” internet video content;
- Require MVPDs to provide their programming to such devices or apps; and
- Prevent MVPDs from charging us additional fees for using them.

To preserve the bargained-for channel placement of the few existing diverse and independent programmers, the FCC should:

- Ensure that these competitive devices or apps allow us to access the same program channel line-up we get on set-top boxes leased from the MVPD.

To protect the advertising revenues of existing cable programmers, the FCC should:

- Prevent competitive device or app makers from stripping out cable and broadcast television advertising content and replacing it with their own advertisements.

THE FCC SHOULD ISSUE GUIDANCE ON ZERO-RATING AND INVESTIGATE DATA CAPS.

People of color and the poor are [far less likely](#) than wealthy, white Americans to have access to broadband, citing cost as the main barrier to broadband access, and [relying disproportionately](#) on smartphones for access. Over 80% of the smartphone-dependent population frequently or occasionally [reaches or exceeds](#) their data limits. 36% of Latinos and 42% of African-Americans have been forced to cut mobile service because of the financial burden.

Meanwhile, some ISPs are seizing this opportunity to attract new customers with “zero-rated” data plans. These may give their customers access to certain parts, but not all parts, of the internet at radically different prices and on different terms. Some of these plans may undermine or violate net neutrality, lifting up entrenched voices to the exclusion of others. Other plans may claim to save us money with supposed “discounts” that are in fact full of overcharges and double billing for the same data. None of them, to date, allow for the unfettered access to the entire internet necessary to eliminate the homework gap and close the digital divide.

The FCC should:

- Carefully examine zero-rated plans for net neutrality violations and prohibit those plans that violate its net neutrality rules;
- Issue guidance on how it will conduct its assessments of zero-rated plans to ensure that they do not violate net neutrality or impose hidden costs; and
- Launch an investigation into data caps that impose unreasonable penalties on people merely making use of the internet access we have already purchased.

The Voices Coalition represents communities of color in the fight for digital freedom. Core members include the Center for Media Justice, National Hispanic Media Coalition, Color of Change, 18 Million Rising and Free Press.

