



May 18, 2018

The Honorable Cedric Richmond
420 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lujan Grisham
214 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Judy Chu
2423 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
2256 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Caucus Leaders:

Net neutrality is a critical racial justice issue. This is why the more than 50 undersigned groups are urging members of the Congressional Black, Hispanic, Asian Pacific, and Native American Caucuses to endorse the resolution of disapproval — sponsored by Rep. Mike Doyle — to repeal the Federal Communications Commission’s decision to eliminate Net Neutrality rules. We also urge Caucus members to publicly support strong Title II open internet protections.

The Trump FCC voted in December to gut the Net Neutrality rules the Commission adopted in 2015 that prevented internet service providers, like AT&T, Comcast, and Verizon, from blocking, throttling and discriminating against online content. The Commission’s vote clears the way for big broadband companies to block websites, slow down web traffic and censor online content.

This decision will change how the internet has always functioned and will harm the ability of communities of color to connect and communicate online.

Net neutrality has enabled people of color to speak for ourselves and tell our own stories and empower our communities without asking permission from broadband gatekeepers on whether our voices are worthy of being heard. We have also used the open internet to organize online and fight for the human rights and dignity of our people. It has enabled us to say #MeToo and no to mass deportation, mass incarceration, the Muslim ban and the Dakota access pipeline.

FCC Chair Ajit Pai’s decision to kill net neutrality is part of the current agency’s ongoing efforts to further the goals of the Trump Administration and push policies that target and punish the most vulnerable members of society.

Since taking the helm of the Commission last year, Chairman Pai has pursued this and other policies that wage war on the poor. For instance, Pai failed to defend the Obama FCC's policy to crack down on corrupt prison phone company practices that make it harder for people to communicate with their incarcerated loved ones, and has put forward a proposal to significantly dismantle the Lifeline program, which provides more affordable phone and internet service for families living well below the poverty line.

The first year of Chairman Pai's tenure has served as a wake up call. His agency's war on the poor is an effort to deny communities of color and low-income households the basic ability to access modern communication networks and prevent us from fully participating in society.

We urge members of the Caucuses that represent communities of color to denounce this assault on the communications rights of people of color by co-sponsoring the resolution of disapproval and overturning the FCC's decision to kill its Net Neutrality rules.

Sincerely,

Center for Media Justice
Free Press
Color of Change
National Hispanic Media Coalition
18 Million Rising

Access Reproductive Care-Southeast
Alliance of South Asians Taking Action
Allied Media Projects
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance
Black Lives Matter Global Network
BYP100
CCTV Center for Media & Democracy
Center for Community Change
Center for Rural Strategies, Inc.
Chinese for Affirmative Action
Chinese Progressive Association, Boston
Common Cause
Common Frequency
CreaTV San Jose
FarFetched, LLC, Damon Davis
Dignity and Power Now
Disability Visibility Project®
Ella Baker Center for Human Rights
Essie Justice Group
Faithful Internet
Fund for Democratic Communities
Generation Justice
Global Action Project
Harriet Tubman Collective
Howard Media Group

Voices for Internet Freedom Coalition, is a national organizing project led by the Center for Media Justice, Free Press, Color Of Change, National Hispanic Media Coalition, and 18 Million Rising (18MR).

Iguana Films/Emerson College
Institute for Local Self-Reliance
Instituto de Educacion Popular del Sur de California
James and Grace Lee Boggs Center to Nurture Community Leadership
LatinoRebels.com
Line Break Media
Livier Productions, Inc.
Martinez Street Women's Center
May First/People Link
Media Alliance
MPower Change
Native Public Media
OVEC-Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition
Petty Propolis
Puerto Rico(PR) on the Map, Rosa Clemente
Race Forward/Center for Social Inclusion
Ridlz
SisterSong: Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective
SouthWest Organizing Project
The Greenlining Institute
The People's Press Project
United Church of Christ, OC Inc.
United We Dream Network
Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center
WITNESS
Women's EDGE Mentoring Program