

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

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May 11, 2017

The Honorable Ajit V. Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable Michael O’Rielly
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai, Commissioner Clyburn, and Commissioner O’Rielly:

We write to urge the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to provide sufficient time for Americans to respond to the latest proposal in the Open Internet proceeding. The draft proposal circulated by Chairman Pai on April 17, 2017, gives only 30 days to reply to initial comments. Under this deadline, these replies would come due in the middle of August, when many small business owners, students, internet users, and workers are away. We therefore request that you extend this comment period by at least one month, as consistent with applicable law.

Chairman Pai has recognized that net neutrality has been the “subject of a fierce public debate.”¹ But more than that, the issue is critically important for the millions of Americans who do not normally participate in FCC proceedings and who cannot afford Washington lawyers to file comments on their behalf. We should all agree that their opinions should count nonetheless. The Commission’s website also recently crashed, making it impossible for the public to submit

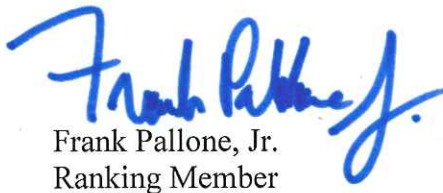
¹ Federal Communications Commission, *Remarks as Prepared for Delivery by Chairman Ajit Pai on the Future of Internet Freedom* (Apr. 26, 2017) (transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2017/db0426/DOC-344590A1.pdf).

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Page 2

comments for some time.² Understanding these facts, during its Open Internet proceeding in 2014, the FCC gave the public from May to July for initial comments and then from July to September to reply to those comments. This comment cycle not only gave Americans time to more fully consider their responses, it allowed the public to return to school, to home, and to work from their August travel. We believe the Commission should provide the public the same courtesy when reconsidering the existing protections.

As Chairman Pai has said, the question the “FCC must answer is what policies will give the American people what they want.”³ We urge you to extend the FCC’s current comment period by at least one month so that the American people can adequately inform the Commission how to answer this question. Developing a fulsome record that gives everyone a fair chance to weigh in should be in everyone’s interest—no matter where they ultimately fall in the net neutrality debate.

Sincerely,



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Ranking Member



Mike Doyle
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Communications
and Technology

² *John Oliver Just Crashed the FCC’s Website Over Net Neutrality—Again*, Motherboard (May 8, 2017) (motherboard.vice.com/en_us/article/john-oliver-just-crashed-the-fccs-website-over-net-neutralityagain).

³ Federal Communications Commission, *Remarks as Prepared for Delivery by Chairman Ajit Pai on the Future of Internet Freedom* (Apr. 26, 2017) (transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2017/db0426/DOC-344590A1.pdf).