

Statement of the Honorable Doris O. Matsui  
Telecom Subcommittee Hearing on Net Neutrality

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I thank the Ranking Member for yielding me time... the chair for holding this hearing... and the witnesses for being here today.

The American people have spoken clearly on how important the Internet is to their daily lives and our economy. I have personally heard from hundreds of my constituents who write, call, or come up to me to share their thoughts. And I heard this message loud and clear when I hosted a field hearing in Sacramento last September on net neutrality with FCC Commissioners Rosenworcel and Clyburn.

It is remarkable how the debate has shifted on net neutrality. I'm glad my Republican colleagues now agree that there are real threats to Internet openness.

But I am concerned about the unintended consequences of the current draft bill. In particular, it could undermine the FCC's efforts to transition USF to broadband... putting at risk broadband deployment and adoption advances in urban and rural areas.

That said, I do believe there is a role for Congress. That is why I introduced a bill with Senator Leahy to instruct the FCC to write rules that ban paid prioritization or so-called Internet Fast lanes. The bill has two main components ...it bans paid prioritization agreements and it does not take away from the Commission's authority.

By contrast, though the Republican bill "attempts" to ban paid prioritization agreements...I am very concerned that the overly broad definition of "specialized services" in the bill...could serve as a loophole for paid prioritization schemes and create a two-tiered Internet system.

The Internet is dynamic... We don't know what tomorrow will bring. The FCC needs flexibility to tailor rules to adapt to changes in the marketplace.

As Congress considers legislation, it is important that the FCC does not slow down or delay its vote on February 26th. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in a truly bipartisan fashion to reinstate strong net neutrality rules.

I yield back the balance of my time.