

# Access Humboldt

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20 October 2009

Dear FCC Commissioners,

*Access Humboldt* urges you to support Network Neutrality, the principle that protects choice of content and equal opportunity on the Internet. Network Neutrality is essential for the Internet to support free speech and ethical civic participation.

The Federal Communications Commission must provide strong leadership in setting policies that secure an open and neutral Internet, where everyone can play a part in our democracy.

Without rules to prevent discrimination online, moneyed special interests will have undue influence regarding whose voices are more important and whose views will be heard. Network Neutrality is necessary to ensure the widest possible dissemination of speech.

Without specific protection from the FCC, free speech is unprotected and subject to controlling influence by commercial and special interests. Under current law, or the lack thereof, Internet service providers can block Web sites, content, services or applications they don't like. And they have, most notably when Comcast secretly interfered with users' ability to access popular video, photo and music-sharing applications; when AT&T censored a political speech by the band Pearl Jam's lead singer; and when Verizon blocked text messages between a pro-choice organization and its members.

People are seeing more troubling behavior in the marketplace. Internet service providers have stated their intention to deploy discriminatory "deep packet inspection" technology that would allow them to monitor and control the Internet. This dangerous technology would give network providers unprecedented power over Internet users, and it presents a serious threat to online privacy.

The FCC must take action now to affirmatively safeguard the free flow of information on the Web before it's too late.

Sincerely,  
Sean McLaughlin  
Executive Director



"Local Voices Through Community Media  
Engage – Connect – Educate"

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