

## Net Neutrality Fact Sheet

### The Internet is not “public property.”

- The Internet is a network of private networks enabled by many *universally-accepted, consensus standards* that no one entity can control or change and that do not require network neutrality:
  - Internet transmission protocol (IP) is *universally-accepted* and enables all types of communications technologies to fully inter-operate and function as one network;
  - Domain Name System (DNS) administered by ICANN, an international non-profit corporation, provides a *universally-accepted* address system for Internet devices; and
  - World Wide Web (www) is a *universally-accepted* standard that makes text, graphics, sound and animation on HTTP Internet servers accessible to Internet users with a point and a click.
- All these *private* networks have *freely and openly* accepted these universal Internet standards, because it is *in their economic self-interest* to do so *and in the interests of their users*, not because it is required.
- While government and academic funds created and funded the original Internet, the U.S. Government *commercialized* the Internet from 1991 to 1995 and it has been *operated privately* ever since.

### Net neutrality is not a *universal* operating “principle” of the Internet today.

- Unlike the universally-accepted consensus standards discussed above, it is obvious from the extreme controversy that net neutrality is neither universally-accepted nor consensus Internet practice.
- For example, the ~20 million American cable broadband users have *never* had network neutrality; and ~200 million American cell phone users also have managed just fine without network neutrality.
- Far from a *consensus* “principle,” net neutrality is a highly-contentious political clash over *network design theory and preference*; where “edge” Internet companies are trying to get the government to *permanently* impose their end-to end network *design* on competitive “network” Internet companies.

### Coercing net neutrality would destroy the Internet’s essence: a mutual self-interest to cooperate.

- Forcing a non-consensus design principle on all the private networks that comprise the Internet could rip apart the *consensus-of-self-interest* and cooperation that keeps the Internet *universally-accepted* today.
- Net neutrality could “kill the proverbial goose that laid the golden egg.” Government coercion did not make the Internet what it is today; it was *free and open mutual-self-interest* and industry *cooperation*.
- Making it *illegal* for broadband companies to differentiate and offer consumers a diversity of choices would permanently disadvantage broadband provider’s vis-à-vis tech and ecommerce giants, and destroy most economic incentives to continue to invest in Internet bandwidth, quality and security.

### Increasing competition and innovation make net neutrality regulation obsolete.

- *Without* competition/technological innovation, network neutrality was necessary monopoly regulation.
- In 1993, Congress passed a law that network neutrality was unnecessary for competitive wireless.
- In 1996, the Telecom Act promoted competition and de-regulation, setting up the phase-out of net neutrality regulation as real competition emerged. That’s why net neutrality was never imposed on cable modems and why the FCC decided August 2005 to phase out net neutrality for DSL.

### Net neutrality is a “Socialized-Internet” not the law’s vision of free and open competition.

- Net neutrality is a debate over what *type* of democracy the Internet will be. A hallmark of American democracy has been strong respect for the rights of individuals, property owners and the minority.
- The Markey and Snowe-Dorgan net neutrality bills would price regulate *competitive and even free* communications for the first time -- before any evidence of the hypothetical problems has emerged.
- Why a free-market Internet is superior to the Government micro-management of a “Socialized-Internet” is that property owners have the *economic and design freedom* and the *mutual economic self-interest* to solve problems, innovate, meet new consumer needs and earn a return on their investment.