

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 08, 2017

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

Dear Chairman Pai:

We understand that you intend the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to vote on your draft order to dismantle our current net neutrality rules at the upcoming Open Commission Meeting on Thursday, December 14. We write calling on you to delay this vote.

As you will remember, in your dissent of the Protecting and Promoting the Open Internet NPRM (GN Docket No. 14-28), you stated¹:

“Going forward, we need to give the American people a full and fair opportunity to participate in this process. And we must ensure that our decisions are based on a robust record.

“So what is the way forward? Here is one suggestion. Just as we commissioned a series of economic studies in past media-ownership proceedings, we should ask ten distinguished economists from across the country to study the impact of our proposed regulations and alternative approaches on the Internet ecosystem. To ensure that we obtain a wide range of perspectives, let each Commissioner pick two authors. To ensure accuracy, each study should be peer reviewed. And to ensure public oversight, we should host a series of hearings where Commissioners could question the authors of the studies and the authors of those studies could discuss their differences. Surely the future of the Internet is no less important than media ownership.

“But we should not limit ourselves to economic studies. We should also engage computer scientists, technologists, and other technical experts to tell us how they see the Internet’s infrastructure and consumers’ online experience evolving. Their studies too should be subject to peer review and public hearings.”

Accordingly, we ask that you heed your own advice and delay your planned vote on this item until you have faithfully executed all of the steps outlined above and provided the American people “a full and fair opportunity to participate in this process.” It is vital that all aspects of the

¹ https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-14-61A5.pdf

draft order are subject to the same peer review and public hearings you have always advocated. This is necessary to ensure “our decisions are based on a robust record.”

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senator



PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator



ELIZABETH WARREN
United States Senator



EDWARD J. MARKEY
United States Senator



SHERROD BROWN
United States Senator