

**National Gay and Lesbian
Task Force**

CREATING CHANGE



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January 14, 2010

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: GN Docket No. 09-191
Addendum to comments submitted January 5, 2010

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

We are writing to clarify the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's (Task Force) position regarding the Federal Communication Commission's proposed rules on "net neutrality" in comments submitted January 5, 2010. The Task Force, the nation's oldest national organization advocating for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community (LGBT), supports the Commission's efforts to bring about universal, affordable, high-speed broadband Internet service. While we believe there are many important issues pertaining to broadband access, affordability, and the free flow of information over the Internet, the Task Force is most concerned about the free flow of information and the importance of access to the LGBT community.

We ask that the Commission commit to the ideal of free and open access on the Internet. We are particularly encouraged by the Commission's intention to make permanent the non-discrimination Internet principle prohibiting Internet Service Providers (ISP) from blocking, or limiting access to, legal content or applications available over the Internet. This issue is of great concern to the LGBT community. The Internet provides a medium through which members of the LGBT family and allies can find accurate information, community, and support. For individuals seeking helpful information on LGBT issues, but isolated either by geography or social barriers, the Internet provides a valuable avenue for knowledge. Ensuring that Internet users are not restricted from accessing the information they want, whether because someone finds a website's material objectionable or because the website is owned by an ISP's competitor, should be a primary concern for the FCC's Internet agenda.

We believe that the Commission recognizes the concerns and needs of businesses providing Internet access as evidenced by the network maintenance exception. We hope that the Commission, as it continues to consider the needs of business, will also work to ensure access to broadband Internet remains available through the broadest array of options possible to ensure innovative competition and affordability are encouraged in the ISP market.

We believe that the implications of these new regulations must be thoroughly examined because of their potential effect on the future of Internet access and content. Universal broadband Internet access may be the best tool we have for engaging and organizing for social justice. We ask that the Commission continue to adequately weigh the important policy of unfettered information access against the collective need of all Internet users.

Sincerely,

Rea Carey
Executive Director