



National Organization for Women

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Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

October 20, 2009

Dear FCC Commissioners,

The National Organization for Women (NOW) urges you to stand with us in support of Network Neutrality, the principle that protects choice of content and equal opportunity on the Internet.

Every day, the Internet becomes more central to the way we communicate and access media content here in the United States and around the world. The Internet has allowed NOW to connect like never before with members and allies, potential supporters, students and educators, government leaders and countless others who can help advance equality for all.

The Internet offers a platform for dialogue amongst feminists who might not otherwise have a chance to strategize together. It empowers women by providing them with information about their status, threats to their rights and opportunities for advancement. It presents a tool for democratic participation by allowing women's rights advocates to easily petition their elected officials and keep tabs on their records. Without a doubt, the women's rights movement benefits immensely from the unprecedented power of an open and accessible Internet.

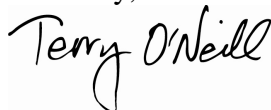
Right now, Washington is in the midst of a critical debate over whether the Internet will continue to serve as a fundamental tool of civic engagement. In this debate, the Federal Communications Commission can be a strong voice on behalf of an open and neutral Internet, where everyone can play a part in our democracy.

Without rules to prevent discrimination online, Internet service providers would be able to decide which voices and viewpoints are most accessible. Network Neutrality levels the playing field by promoting the widest possible dissemination of speech.

It's a mistake to assume that the Internet is already a space where free speech is protected and ensured. Under current law, or the lack thereof, Internet service providers can block Web sites, content, services or applications they don't like. Verizon already demonstrated its willingness to obstruct political communication when it blocked text messages between a pro-choice group and its members.

The FCC must take action now to affirmatively safeguard the free flow of information on the web before it's too late. The Internet has become a crucial democratic tool, particularly for groups such as women who continue to struggle for full equality in our society. It must be protected.

Sincerely,



Terry O'Neill
NOW President