

May 26, 2010

The Honorable John D. Rockefeller
Chairman
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
254 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Chairman, Subcommittee on Communications, Technology and the Internet
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
254 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairmen Rockefeller and Kerry:

In the wake of a court case that significantly eroded the Commission's authority to adopt policies affecting broadband Internet access service providers, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Julius Genachowski recently announced plans to modernize the Commission's approach to broadband policy. We support the FCC Chairman's action as a necessary near-term fix to ensure that the Commission has the ability to protect consumers, promote competition, and ensure that all Americans have access to affordable broadband service.

We also applaud your announcement that bicameral committee leadership will begin a process to consider reform of the Communications Act to better fit today's communications marketplace. We appreciate your leadership to ensure that Congress can provide longer-term stability for all stakeholders in this space. We see these parallel legislative and regulatory processes as perfectly consistent to deal with both the short term needs and the long term reform of broadband policy. As the FCC does necessary work to fill the gap in consumer protection created by the court decision, we look forward to working with you in a legislative process that will protect consumers and promote innovation and economic growth.

The undersigned organizations commit to working with you in the long process to consider the best path for a comprehensive revision of communications law. We would like to make sure the voices of average consumers and citizens are not lost in this process. We hope you will see fit to involve consumer and public interest voices in the same discussions alongside industry leaders and other stakeholders as you move forward to reform the Communications Act and establish long-term consumer safeguards, while promoting greater access, competition, innovation and economic growth. We support your call for a rational approach to this important task and look forward to working with you in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Beth McConnell
Executive Director
Media and Democracy Coalition

Charles Benton
Chairman and CEO
Benton Foundation

Derek Turner
Research Director
Free Press

Gigi Sohn
President
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Jessica J. Gonzalez
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Michael Bracy
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Michael Calabrese
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New America Foundation

Sascha Meinrath
Director, Open Technology Initiative
New America Foundation

Tyrone Brown
President
Media Access Project

cc: Ranking Member Kay Bailey Hutchison