

VICENTE GONZALEZ
15TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITAL MARKETS,
SECURITIES, AND INVESTMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND INSURANCE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

WASHINGTON OFFICE
113 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-2531

EDINBURG OFFICE
2864 W. TRENTON ROAD
EDINBURG, TX 78539
(956) 682-5545
gonzalez.house.gov

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4315

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November 28, 2017

The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Pai:

I am writing you today on behalf of hundreds of constituents of the 15th District of Texas who have contacted me just within the last few days regarding the issue of Net Neutrality being considered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). These individuals took time over the Thanksgiving holiday to voice their opposition to your plan.

During the past few months, I have followed these issues carefully and have reviewed some of the comments made by you and other FCC leadership. It is alarming that throughout the course of your deliberations, one must look far and wide for advocates of your proposal. Additionally, I have not heard from a single constituent in South Texas who is in favor of giving up Net Neutrality.

It appears you are prepared to lead the FCC in a direction towards Net Favoritism instead of Net Neutrality, against the weight of the evidence, past experience, and even against public interest. Changing how people view, receive, and pay for internet use via Net Neutrality will more than likely allow large internet companies to begin charging service fees for downstream providers, which will in turn be passed on to consumers.

You have proclaimed that the end of Net Neutrality is to the benefit of small business, but I strongly disagree with this assessment. Never mind the hundreds of messages, letters, and communications from small businesses stating the exact opposite: that Net Neutrality will hurt them and force them to pay additional fees to an internet service provider (ISP) to display their website with proper speeds after lifting internet neutrality. You have cited Facebook, Amazon, and Google, which allege to have flourished under the “light-touch” rules, as they are known at the FCC. Recently, the Google Wallet app was blocked by a competitor with an ISP through a competing app, which you called an “outlying” example.

Finally, you have asserted that small businesses could help connect rural communities to the internet highway. Even knowing that small internet and telecom companies essentially rent their use of the network owned by the largest of all telecom companies. And while a quarter of a billion dollars is a drop in the bucket towards expanding the internet, my question to you is, ‘do you think it will come from small firms?’ The definite losers in this battle are the startup enterprises, the mom and pop shops, and the entrepreneurs - those who are not yet robust enough to weather the blow of these grave changes.

I request that you reconsider your position and that you do the right thing: keep Net Neutrality in place so consumers and small businesses can continue to have access to affordable and accessible internet.

Should you have any questions, or wish to discuss this with me in greater detail, please contact me at (202) 225-2531.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vicente Gonzalez".

Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress