



The voice of mid-size communications companies

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*** * * PRESS STATEMENT * * ***

ITTA Opposes the FCC's Open Internet and Municipal Broadband Decisions

(Washington, DC) The following statement was released today by ITTA - The Voice of Mid-Size Communications Companies and may be attributed to Genny Morelli, President of ITTA:

“ITTA strongly opposes the Federal Communications Commission’s decisions at today’s Open Meeting to subject broadband Internet access service to public utility-style regulation and to undermine state authority to oversee local governments within their jurisdiction with respect to the provision of municipal broadband service. There is no justification for either decision from a legal or policy perspective.

Open Internet. ITTA members work hard to ensure their networks afford customers adequate openness. There is no market failure or demonstrated need for further regulation of the Internet or broadband Internet access at this time yet today’s action will impose onerous new obligations on ITTA members and permit government micromanagement of the entire Internet ecosystem. These new obligations threaten to destroy the virtuous cycle of growth and innovation that has been transforming the American economy and way of life.

The Title II regulatory approach chosen by the Commission is unlawful. The provisions of Title II were expressly designed to apply to voice services and have no application in the context of broadband Internet service. Moreover, the Commission’s reliance on forbearance from certain provisions of Title II misuses the forbearance tool and does not cure the illegality of the Commission’s decision.

Municipal Broadband. The FCC’s usurpation of a state’s right to oversee the governmental entities within its jurisdiction fundamentally contravenes the basic Constitutional principle of federalism. The FCC’s decision also is bad policy. The record is replete with examples of failed municipal broadband networks, which is the reason numerous states have enacted provisions to protect their citizens from potential failures. The FCC should not interfere with state sovereignty to protect local taxpayers from such high-risk undertakings.

ITTA intends to be involved in the appeals process with respect to these decisions and is confident the FCC's actions today will be overturned. ITTA also supports appropriate legislative solutions regarding the regulatory status of broadband services to provide necessary certainty for continued investment in advanced technology and services.”

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ITTA represents mid-size communications companies that provide a broad range of high quality wireline and wireless voice, broadband, Internet, and video services to residential and business customers in predominately rural areas across 45 states. For more information, please visit www.itta.us.