



May 4, 2006

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Capitol Building, H-232  
Washington, DC 20515-6501

Dear Speaker Hastert:

As you prepare to move the “Communications Opportunity, Promotion, and Enhancement Act of 2006” to the House Floor for final consideration, TeleCONSENSUS—a broad-based coalition that advocates modernizing the nation’s telecommunications laws—urges you to reject the inclusion of any “net neutrality” language. This provision is unnecessary and has the potential to stifle new investment in broadband network infrastructure, stall the introduction of innovative technologies, and hinder consumer choice.

First, TeleCONSENSUS opposes any attempt to place economic regulations on new technology. Legislating “net neutrality” would, for the first time, impose this type of regulation on the Internet. Telecommunications markets should be driven by consumer demand, advances in technology, and competition between telecommunications companies, not by government regulation. Indeed, the intense competition between cable operators, phone companies, and others for broadband customers requires providers to quickly respond to market developments and offer differentiated services to attract business. The various pricing plans offered to broadband subscribers today are but one example of this phenomenon.

Second, anticipatory regulation must be rejected. The FCC’s net neutrality principles are working. The principles state that consumers are entitled to access their choice of lawful Internet content and connect their choice of legal devices that do not harm the network. There is no evidence that network providers plan to interfere with traffic from competing providers or slow down the service of some sites in favor of others. Moreover, bad actors can and will be punished by the market, and in many cases, the FCC.

Telecommunications companies are building broadband networks throughout the United States, and applications and content are being developed for these networks. U.S. broadband penetration rates are rising, and as of February 2006, 68% of U.S. households with Internet access subscribed to broadband, up from 53.4% in February 2005. Now is not the time to introduce rules that would inflict regulatory uncertainty, stifle investment, slow the development of new technologies, and inhibit U.S. economic development and competitiveness.

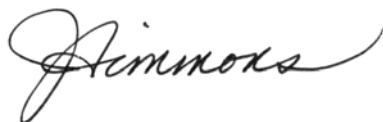
To ensure that our nation creates an economic climate that fosters innovation and investment in its telecommunications industry, and to educate Congress and the public about the benefits of an economically robust telecommunications system, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the National Black Chamber of Commerce formed the TeleCONSENSUS coalition. TeleCONSENSUS is made up of trade associations, chambers of commerce, telecommunications providers and equipment manufacturers, businesses, and consumers.

Thank you in advance for considering these comments. TeleCONSENSUS looks forward to continuing to work with you as the legislation goes forward.

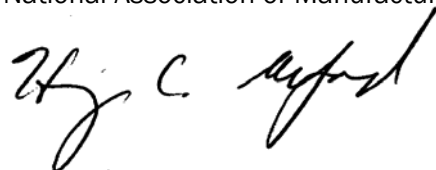
Sincerely,



R. Bruce Josten  
Executive Vice President  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce



Jay Timmons  
Senior Vice President, Policy and Government Relations  
National Association of Manufacturers



Harry Alford  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
National Black Chamber of Commerce