

For Immediate Release – May 24, 2006

Media Contact: Bill Kovacs/202-463-5457

TeleCONSENSUS Opposes House Judiciary “Net Neutrality” Legislation

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Legislation implementing a “net neutrality” policy would result in regulation of the Internet that would stifle investment, stall the introduction of innovative technologies, and leave consumers with fewer choices and higher prices, according to the TeleCONSENSUS coalition.

“If the goal is to cripple the Internet—a key component of communications, information, and commerce—then H.R. 5417 would accomplish that,” said William L. Kovacs, vice president for Environment, Technology & Regulatory Affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and spokesman for TeleCONSENSUS. “The information superhighway will quickly deteriorate into a congested one-way street if companies who want to invest in it can’t expect a good return on their money.”

The House Judiciary Committee is expected to markup H.R. 5417, The Internet Freedom and Nondiscrimination Act of 2006, tomorrow.

Information traveling on the Internet will increase 500-fold by the year 2020. To avoid gridlock on the information superhighway, competing wireline and wireless will need to invest hundreds of billions of dollars to build more fiber lanes. Net neutrality legislation would discourage such investments, according to TeleCONSENSUS.

“The Internet has succeeded because it has not been regulated,” said Kovacs. “‘Net neutrality’ is government regulation of the Internet. We cannot have a policy that will impose more regulation on innovation.”

Led by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Black Chamber of Commerce, and the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, TeleCONSENSUS represents a vast and diverse business community. Its mission is to educate policymakers, the business community, and the public about the need for modernized federal telecommunications laws and the importance of advanced telecommunications services to the U.S. economy. TeleCONSENSUS has more than 190 member organizations representing trade associations, chambers of commerce, telecommunications providers and equipment manufacturers, businesses, and consumers.