

“THE INTERNET NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT OF 2006”

Introduced by U.S. Senator Ron Wyden (D-Ore.)

What is Network Neutrality?

Network neutrality is the principle that all content on the Internet should get equal treatment.

Why Do We Need Net Neutrality?

The powerful interests that control the “pipes” of the Internet should not be able to control the content on the Internet for users or start charging content and applications providers for access to consumers. The information superhighway should not be filled with discrimination.

Important for Business and Innovation

Small businesses also need network neutrality. Since the Internet took off in the 1990s, small businesses have thrived on the Internet because of their ability to reach consumers with their products via the net.

Innovation would be stifled if network operators were allowed to slap providers with extra charges or pick winners and losers. The growth of the Internet and its success are due in large part to the freedom that has always existed on the Internet. Innovation has thrived because anyone with a good idea has the ability to reach consumers.

Important For Consumers

With net neutrality, consumers will continue to have a range of choices in how they use the Internet. In a world without network neutrality, network operators will leave consumers with fewer choices and higher prices.

Key Principles

Under the bill, the operators of the network would be required to treat all content on the Internet equally. This includes:

- Preventing interfering with, blocking, degrading, altering, modifying or changing traffic on the Internet;
- Prohibiting creation of a priority lane where content providers can buy quicker access to customers, while those who don't pay the fee are left in the slow lane;
- Allowing consumers to choose which devices they use to connect to the Internet while they are on the Internet;
- Ensuring that consumers have non-discriminatory access and service;
- Having a transparent system whereby consumers, Internet content, and applications companies have access to the rates, terms, and conditions for Internet service.

In preserving network neutrality, the bill also takes steps to preserve the right of consumers to use spam, spyware, pop-up and other blocking services; makes sure emergency communications can be given priority treatment; and allows network operators to aid law enforcement by preventing the transmission of illegal content.

Supporters of the Internet Non-Discrimination Act include nearly a dozen consumer and technology interests including eBay-Skype, FreePress, and Consumers Union.