



June 30, 2014

We at Vermont Realtors® would like to express our opinion on the new Open Internet rules as we feel this would eliminate Net Neutrality and create a serious hardship for our hard working Realtors®. Increasingly our business is conducted over the Internet. Streaming video, Voice over Internet Protocol, and mobile applications are commonly used technologies in our members' businesses today. In the future, new technologies like virtual reality and telepresence, among others will be available that will no doubt require open Internet access unencumbered by technical or financial discrimination.

The Internet has been a driving force for innovation for decades and our members, their customers, and local communities are benefiting from this innovation every day. The economic growth and job creation fueled by the open Internet is unprecedented in American economic history. This growth has been fostered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) under both Republican and Democrat administrations, for over a decade.

The FCC has recently proposed and is seeking comment on new Open Internet rules that would permit Internet service providers to discriminate technically against and impose new tolls on American businesses that operate on the Internet. Permitting these actions would be disruptive to our member businesses that have come to rely on an open Internet. Moreover, these actions would be especially harmful for small businesses and start-ups competing against larger companies that can afford such tolls. In order to continue the economic boom enabled by Internet innovation, we support and will urge the FCC instead to adopt open Internet rules that will protect against blocking, discrimination, access charges, and paid prioritization.

The benefits of broadband Internet for innovation and economic development are unparalleled. But we'll lose those tremendous benefits if the Internet does not remain an open platform, where Americans can innovate without permission and with low barriers to launching small businesses and creating jobs. We ask that you stand with Main Street businesses across this nation and join us in calling for the preservation of a free and open Internet that allows innovation to continue unencumbered.

Sincerely,

Donna Cusson

Donna Cusson
2014 President