



August 17, 2007

The Honorable Deborah Plat Majoras  
Chairman  
Federal Trade Commission  
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20580

RE: Net Neutrality

The Special Libraries Association (SLA), which represents more than 11,000 information professionals in the global information industry and librarians in corporate, academic, and government environments, respectfully requests the U.S. Federal Trade Commission to reconsider its decision of June 2007 to abandon Internet Neutrality.

The FTC report titled "Broadband Connectivity Competition Policy," is, in SLA's opinion, shortsighted and a threat to an open, robust and independent Internet. We believe the FTC's position that the Internet is operating well today, and, therefore, does not merit regulatory protection tomorrow is flawed.

Network neutrality is critical to the free-flow of information to consumers and businesses alike. Steps must be taken sooner than later to prevent interference with blocking, degrading, altering, modifying or changing traffic on the Internet and prohibiting priority lanes in which some providers may deliver faster access to users willing to pay a premium while those unable to pay are left in the slow lane.

The Commission appears to have taken the logic behind the saying, 'If it ain't broke, don't fixed it,' and has turned it completely on its head by appearing to suggest 'If it ain't broke, don't protect it.'

In your June statement, you said "this report recommends that policy makers proceed with caution in the evolving dynamic industry of broadband Internet access, which generally is moving toward more – not less-competition." You also state, "In the absence of significant market failure or demonstrated consumer harm, policy makers should be particularly hesitant to enact new regulation in this area."

SLA understands the need for policymakers to be cautious about taking action on every potential problem the nation could address. If, however, the federal government had waited until our national wilderness areas had been blighted before protecting these scenic treasures, what would have been the point?

The Internet is a treasure of a completely different kind, but it merits our protection in order to ensure this extraordinary communications vehicle remains open and accessible to all who can benefit from it. Do we really want to roll the dice when it comes to the public's continued open-access to Internet applications and content? SLA believes the answer is, 'No'.

That you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Janice R. Lachance, CEO  
Special Libraries Association