Independent Women's Voice®

Net Neutrality
in 60 Seconds

What's at Stake:

The Internet has always been free and open. It developed independent of heavy-handed government regulations for decades with little or no evidence of anti-competitive, anti-consumer behavior.

Bad Solution: Net Neutrality regulations

In 2015, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released the *Open Internet Order.* It:

- Reclassified broadband Internet access service as a utility under Title II of the Communications Act of 1934 and shifted oversight authority from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to the FCC.
- Opened the door for new regulations to be imposed on Internet providers (Net Neutrality). Specifically, the Order prohibited companies from:
  - **Blocking** access to legal content, applications, and services;
  - **Throttling** or impairing lawful Internet traffic;
  - Offering **paid prioritization** or preferential treatment to their content or services (also known as "Internet fast lanes").

Net Neutrality resulted in:

- **Stifled innovation** amid new regulatory burdens.
- **Reduced broadband expansion:** Building infrastructure to expand to rural areas is expensive and Net Neutrality made it more expensive.
  - Broadband network investment declined by $3.6 billion— more than 5 percent, the first time investment declined outside of a recession.
  - Small providers delayed or reduced network expansion/services.

A Better Path Forward: No Net Neutrality Regulations

In 2017, the FCC passed the *Restoring Internet Freedom Order* to start repeal of Net Neutrality.

- U.S. Internet speeds jumped from 12th to 6th fastest in the world.
- Download speeds increased nearly 40 percent; upload speeds jumped over 20 percent.
- In one year, the number of Americans lacking basic high-speed connections fell over 25 percent, from 26.1 million to 19.4 million.

The Internet should be free, open and accessible to all, but Net Neutrality regulations run counter to this goal.

Addressing Concerns:

CONCERNS	RESPONSES
Without Net Neutrality, companies will slow down Internet access.	*The Washington Post* debunked this claim. - After Net Neutrality, the user experience has only improved as speeds increased and millions more Americans gained access to high-speed Internet.
Without Net Neutrality, there will be no oversight.	Today, there actually *two* federal agencies overseeing the Internet - Prior to Net Neutrality, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) had oversight to prevent anti-competitive or anti-consumer behaviors. - The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) grabbed that authority through Net Neutrality regulations. - The 2017 Net Neutrality repeal split oversight authority between the FTC and FCC.
Net Neutrality protects free speech.	- It is Internet content creators (such as Facebook and Twitter), not Internet providers (like Comcast and Verizon) who face public scrutiny for censoring content on their platforms. - Net Neutrality rules focused on Internet delivery, not editorial decisions about content.