

Rep. Townsend offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 39.

A resolution to memorialize the President of the United States, the U.S. Congress, and the U.S. Federal Communications Commission to stand firm on the decision to regulate broadband Internet services as common carrier services under Title II of the Communications Act of 1934 in the interest of preserving net neutrality.

Whereas, More so than any other invention of our time, the Internet has unlocked possibilities that were unimaginable a generation ago. The Internet is a vital platform for innovation, economic growth, and free expression in the United States; and

Whereas, The incredible economic growth and entrepreneurial innovation that has proven possible through the Internet relies upon the principle of broadband providers treating Internet traffic, or data, equally. This principle—known as net neutrality—holds that an entrepreneur’s fledgling company should have the same opportunity to succeed as established corporations, and that access to an individual’s blog should not be unjustly restricted through a slower speed to make way for businesses with more money. Open and fair use of the Internet promotes competition and enables innovation and investment by making it possible for anyone, anywhere to easily launch applications and services that revolutionize the way people communicate, socialize, create, live, and do business. It leads to job creation across communities in the country; and

Whereas, Under the principle of net neutrality, consumers can make their own choices about what applications and services to use and are free to decide what lawful content they wish to create, access, and share, without facing restrictions. With net neutrality, you do not have to ask permission or pay tolls to broadband providers to reach others on the Internet. If you develop an innovative new website, you do not have to seek permission from your Internet provider to share it with the world; and

Whereas, Without proper regulation, there is a risk that net neutrality, and its benefits, could be wiped out. The absence of an open and fair Internet would imperil the ability of Americans to express their views and ideas and market their intellectual property equally. Allowing broadband providers to charge different rates to guarantee higher priority and faster data transmission would deny small businesses, locally managed networks, and start-up companies full connectivity and access to open and fair use of the Internet. It would similarly hinder consumers’ use of the Internet; and

Whereas, On December 23, 2010, the U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued the *Open Internet Order*, which set certain rules for the broadband industry to protect Internet openness. The FCC’s rules were challenged in court, and on January 14, 2014, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals vacated some of the rules based on the order’s regulatory framework. However, the court affirmed the FCC’s authority to regulate broadband Internet access service and supported the FCC’s judgment that Internet openness encourages broadband investment and that its absence could impede broadband deployment. The court also invited the FCC to act to preserve free and open use of the Internet; and

Whereas, In response to the court’s ruling, on May 15, 2014, the FCC launched a rulemaking process, seeking public comment on how best to protect, preserve, and promote net neutrality. The notice of proposed rulemaking posed a broad range of questions to elicit input from everyone impacted by the Internet, from consumers and small businesses to providers and start-ups; and

Whereas, On February 26, 2015, the FCC passed rules to protect net neutrality and equal access to content and services available on the Internet. The rules reclassified Internet service as a telecommunications, not information, service. This reclassification and associated rules designate broadband essentially as a public utility, which grants the FCC greater oversight over the industry. As a result, Americans will not be subject to service providers determining the speed at which they can access information on the Internet. Since net neutrality promotes competition, entrepreneurs and small businesses will also benefit from the rules. Net neutrality will keep the United States at the forefront of technological, business, and social innovation on the Internet; and

Whereas, It is the judgment of the Michigan House of Representatives that the FCC's action to reclassify the Internet as a public utility and preserve net neutrality will produce benefits across the state. The rules will facilitate investment in Michigan's broadband Internet infrastructure and foster innovation in the state's business sectors. Additionally, it will ensure Michiganders can openly access legal information and service on the Internet without infringement from providers. Members of the Michigan House of Representatives applaud the FCC for removing obstacles to widen broadband use by designating Internet broadband services as common carrier telecommunications services under Title II of the Communications Act of 1934 in the interest of preserving net neutrality; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the President of the United States, the U.S. Congress, and the U.S. Federal Communications Commission to stand firm on the decision to regulate broadband Internet services as common carrier services under Title II of the Communications Act of 1934 in the interest of preserving net neutrality; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the chairs of all committees in the U.S. House of Representative, the chairs of all committees in the U.S. Senate, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, and the commissioners of the U.S. Federal Communications Commission.