



VIA FAX

May 24, 2006

The Honorable F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.
Chairman
Judiciary Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

This letter was sent to the following:

F. James Sensenbrenner	Darrell Issa	Sheila Jackson Lee
Henry J. Hyde	Jeff Flake	Maxine Waters
Howard Coble	Mike Pence	Marty Meehan
Lamar S. Smith	Randy Forbes	William Delahunt
Elton Gallegly	Steve King	Robert I. Wexler
Bob Goodlatte	Tom Feeney	Anthony D. Weiner
Steve Chabot	Trent Franks	Adam Schiff
Dan Lungren	Louie Gohmert	Linda T. Sanchez
William L. Jenkins	Johns Conyers, Jr.	Chris Van Hollen, Jr.
Chris Cannon	Howard L. Berman	Debbie Wasserman Schultz
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Dear Mr. Chairman:

Universal, High-Speed Internet is a Top National Priority

The Communications Workers of America (CWA) believes that deployment of universal, affordable high-speed networks must be a top national priority and is the key Internet issue before Congress. CWA believes that H.R. 5417 would retard this goal.

Speed Matters

The United States has fallen to 16th in the world in broadband penetration. Other countries have made universal deployment at speeds of 100 megabits per second (mbps) a national goal. H.R. 5417, the "Internet Freedom and Nondiscrimination Act of 2006," will result in the unintended consequence of delayed deployment of high-speed networks, with particularly negative impact on underserved communities.

H.R. 5417 would amend our nation's anti-trust laws to require *all* broadband network carriers to offer their network service *for free* to any company that wants to offer content or applications over that network at the same quality and speed that the broadband network handles its own content and services.

Under such an arrangement, broadband network providers would not be able to recover the billions of dollars they invest in the construction of high-speed networks. As a result, investment in the physical infrastructure necessary to provide high-speed Internet will slow down, the U.S. will fall even further behind the rest of the world, and our rural and low-income populations will wait even longer to enter the digital age.

Open Internet is Vital

CWA supports an open Internet and has long worked to ensure a diverse and vibrant media as the foundation of our democracy. Therefore, CWA supports public policies that put access to Internet content in the hands of users, not the corporate owners of the broadband networks. CWA supports legislation to

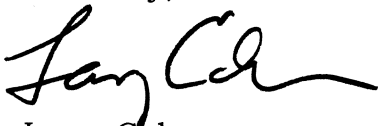
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protect consumers' right to purchase individual channels or smaller bundles of video programming on an à la carte basis.

There are ways to protect an open Internet that do not neutralize network investment. One alternative is to build on the approach in H.R. 5252, the Communications Opportunity, Promotion, and Enhancement (COPE) Act of 2006. This bill gives the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) the authority to ensure an open Internet through a complaint adjudication process. The FCC would have the authority to ensure consumers can access the lawful content of their choice; run applications and services of their choice, subject to law enforcement; connect their choice of legal devices that do not harm the network; and ensure competition among network providers, application and service providers, and content providers.

In conclusion, CWA believes build-out of a high-speed Internet network to all Americans is the most pressing Internet issue we face and H.R. 5417 is heading the wrong way on the information highway. We urge you not to put network deployment in neutral, and adopt policies that will bring the benefits of high-speed Internet to all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Cohen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Larry Cohen
President