

News Release

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Consumers Groups Welcome FCC Action on Network Neutrality

WASHINGTON – Consumers Union (CU) and Consumer Federation of America (CFA) today welcomed the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)'s announcement that it is moving forward on rules to prohibit Internet providers from favoring or discriminating against traffic that goes over their networks.

FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski today said the Commission would vote this month on rules for network neutrality.

CU and CFA said that FCC action could help resolve the current uncertainty in the Internet marketplace. The groups said unanimity on net neutrality may be impossible, but inaction is unacceptable. Inaction, they said, would allow network operators to discriminate at will, which would destroy the openness of the Internet.

Parul Desai, Policy Counsel for CU, said, "Internet users have been in limbo over the past few years as the FCC and Congress grappled with keeping the Internet open to all. This is important because consumers should be able to surf the web without their Internet provider limiting their choices to its preferred sites. Today's announcement is welcome news. This is just the beginning of the process, and we're eager to work with the FCC in establishing viable and sensible rules that will bring clarity and certainty to consumers."

Mark Cooper, Research Director for CFA, said, "The only way to preserve the open Internet is for the FCC to immediately put in place a pragmatic set of rules that gives teeth to the principles that have governed the open Internet since its inception. We need to establish facts on the ground and gain practical experience with network management in the broadband era. Ultimately, the devil will be in the details of the final order, but the FCC appears headed toward the right goal. We look forward to working with the Commission to ensure an effective framework not only for network neutrality, but also for universal service and consumer protection."