

Net neutrality

When there is a structural reason consumers don't have freedom of choice, and the free market can't work, consumers need minimal protection from the government so that they don't get abused.

We need protection from the cable companies to keep the Internet fair and open.

I think that most people misunderstand the net neutrality issue; the Internet backbone isn't neutral anyway. But that's ok; there are multiple paths to traverse it.

This is not the case for the "last mile". Consumers often can only buy Internet access from a single provider; there is no choice. These providers would like to be able to make some traffic more equal than others and accept payment for it. [1] This isn't allowed for voice, and it shouldn't be allowed for data.

Municipalities, often for good reason, gave these edge providers a monopoly (the bad kind of monopoly where consumers can't choose to leave) and often used tax dollars to fund the development. At this point, the Internet is a public service and fair access should be a basic right.

I would love to see a world where the companies that own last-mile infrastructure are required to lease the lines to any ISP the end consumer wants; this would create a competitive market and mostly eliminate the problem. [2]

The Internet has been the great bright spot in US innovation in the last decade. It's mostly been a free and open platform, where anyone can get

something started. When the great companies start, they often look like very fragile projects. Any additional barriers, however small, could easily have stopped Google or Facebook from getting going.

I have met with the Chairman of the FCC, Tom Wheeler, and I believe he is a good actor who wants to do the right thing. But he is fighting against very powerful lobbyists and large companies that want to disrupt the freedom of the Internet. We should help him defend it.

As long as consumers don't have freedom of choice, last-mile traffic discrimination should be per se illegal. Please go to [fcc.gov](https://www.fcc.gov) and file in support of this by tomorrow. Alexis Ohanian will be filing on behalf of Y Combinator shortly.

[1] Unpaid prioritization is sometimes necessary; if everyone in a neighborhood is trying to stream 4k video, something is going to get prioritized.

[2] One reason wireless Internet is good that is that it doesn't face the last-mile challenge; consumers can choose among Verizon, ATT, Sprint, etc.