

More Than 100 Mayors Sign Open Internet Pledge as FCC's Net Neutrality Repeal Set to Take Effect

"We each commit our city to take all available steps to ensure the internet remains open and to keep gatekeepers from throttling, blocking, or limiting government content," says the pledge.

By [Jessica Corbett](#)

Global Research, April 28, 2018

[Common Dreams](#) 27 April 2018

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

Featured image: The Republican-controlled FCC's vote to repeal net neutrality protections prompted nationwide protests. (Photo: [Tim Carter](#)/Flickr/cc)

In direct response to the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) December [vote](#) to repeal [net neutrality](#) protections, more than 100 mayors nationwide [have now signed](#) a pledge vowing to defend the [open internet](#) at the local level.

[Unveiled](#) by the mayors of New York City; Austin, Texas; and Portland, Oregon last month, the [Cities Open Internet Pledge](#) states that signatories will only conduct business with internet service providers (ISPs) that adhere to net neutrality standards, and reads in part,

"We each commit our city to take all available steps to ensure the internet remains open and to keep gatekeepers from throttling, blocking, or limiting government content."

[#BREAKING](#): over 100 mayors have joined our [#NetNeutrality](#) pledge to fight corporate interests and keep an open internet! Your city can still join us - head to <https://t.co/tcio000aCX> for more information. pic.twitter.com/4tV2SEPjGt

— Ted Wheeler (@tedwheeler) [April 26, 2018](#)

The mounting support for the pledge comes as the "[slow and insidious](#)" death of federal net neutrality rules [has begun](#). While the Republican-controlled FCC was adamant about urgently repealing the rules leading up to last year's vote, Chairman Ajit Pai is intentionally delaying the repeal, which could have been posted on Monday. His office has claimed that it is due to bureaucratic processes and a desire for a "[smooth transition](#)."

However, as [VICE explained](#), some experts believe the delay is actually a strategic move designed to buy time for Republicans in Congress to pass "a [bogus net neutrality law](#)" that they say will resolve the conflict between the telecommunications industry and consumers, "but whose real intention is to pre-empt tougher state laws, and block the FCC's 2015 rules from being restored in the wake of a possible court loss."

“If bureaucrats in Washington, D.C., won’t protect net neutrality against the FCC’s wrongheaded decision, local leaders are ready to step up for the people they represent,” [declared](#) Timothy Karr of the Free Press Action Fund, which [partnered](#) with a coalition of groups to create [MayorsForNetNeutrality.org](#) and enable residents to encourage their majors to sign the pledge.

Pointing out that the pledge has, on average, gained more than three supporters per day, Karr noted,

“So many mayors are signing on because they understand that an open internet is vital to the livelihood of their communities.”

St. Louis Mayor Lyda Krewson explained that “internet access is increasingly part of how we deliver services,” so sustaining the protections that bar ISPs from blocking, throttling, or charging more for certain content “is vitally important to ensure communications with our citizens, both daily and during emergencies.”

In addition to only working with ISPs that abide by the soon-to-be defunct federal regulations, pledge signatories also promise to:

- ensure an open internet connection for free or subsidized services for residents;
- mandate that ISPs post notices when blocking or prioritizing content;
- monitor ISPs’ practices;
- encourage residents to use net neutrality-friendly ISPs; and
- follow net neutrality standards when providing internet service directly to residents via free public Wi-Fi or [municipal broadband](#), which has increasingly garnered support in the wake of the FCC decision.

While city and [state](#) leaders increasingly use their platforms to defend the open internet, advocates and congressional Democrats are working to pass a Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution to overturn the FCC’s repeal.

Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.), who has introduced a resolution in the Senate, took to Twitter Thursday to note the widespread support for net neutrality rules among the American public and maintain pressure on Republican lawmakers to support his measure.

Supporting [#NetNeutrality](#) :

82% of Republicans
90% of Democrats
85% of Independents
100% of [@SenateDems](#)
1 (ONE) Senate Republican [#OneMoreVote...](#)

— Ed Markey (@SenMarkey) [April 26, 2018](#)

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