

‘Uphill Battle,’ but Net Neutrality Defenders Say Victory in House Possible

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By [Jon Queally](#)

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Celebrating [the 'historic win' in the Senate on Wednesday](#) for only the briefest of moments, advocates for the open Internet who have worked relentlessly to reverse an effort by the telecommunications industry and Trump's FCC to kill net neutrality protections have immediately turned their attention to the U.S. House of Representatives where they say victory is possible if the American people keep up the pressure.

"The people saying we can't win on net neutrality in the House are the same people who, just 5 months ago, were saying we could never do it in the Senate," said Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) on Thursday. "Ignore them. Just keep fighting."

Markey led the opposition to the FCC in the Senate as lead sponsor of a Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution that passed on Wednesday in a 52-47 victory that was celebrated across the Internet.

Now, say organizers, it's time to turn that same energy—coupled with the momentum from the Senate win—to force the GOP-controlled House to allow a vote on the same CRA.

"With the majority leadership in the House opposed to this bill, the only way to bring it before the full House for a vote is through a discharge petition," Rep. Mike Doyle (D-Penn.), who is [filing the petition, said Wednesday](#). "I'm sure that every member of the House will want to know where their constituents stand on this issue."

Back by powerful corporate interests and the telecom lobby, FCC Chairman Ajit Pai [has expressed confidence](#) that the Democrats will not succeed.

But in [a detailed explainer](#) about the battle to come, Fight for the Future, one of the consumer advocacy and net neutrality advocates that has led the charge so far, said the fight in the House will be an "uphill battle," but one that it intends to win.

"DC insiders and pundits claim that we'll never get anywhere in the House,"

the group stated, echoing Markey. And, they added, “those are the same DC insiders that never thought we’d get a Senate vote.”

In order to implement the “discharge petition” introduced by Rep. Doyle, the group the noted, they’ll need 218 House members to sign on in support:

That means we’ll need to convince all the Democrats, and about 25 Republicans, to support the CRA. And the clock is ticking—if the CRA resolution doesn’t get a vote this year, it dies when the new Congress comes into session.

Outside of Washington, DC, net neutrality is not a partisan issue. But with the Republicans in power, the big ISPs have been putting all of their eggs into that basket, spreading misinformation that targets conservatives and trying to turn the net neutrality debate into a political circus. But we’re seeing cracks in that wall. Several Republican Senators have been openly considering voting for the CRA, while one of President Trump’s own high level advisors encouraged him to support it should it arrive on his desk.

If we can seize the momentum around this Senate vote and mobilize massive pressure on the House, we could see a small landslide of Republican lawmakers who choose to side with their constituents rather than cast a vote against net neutrality just months before the midterms. Either way, we need to harness as much political power as we can coming out of this CRA fight to ensure that we’re negotiating from a place of strength in any future congressional debates on the issue.

In [a blog post](#) for the Electronic Frontier Foundation, policy analyst Katharine Trendacosta provided links to where constituents could find out “[where your representatives stand\[s\]](#)” on net neutrality and also a link to a portal that would allow votes to “[give \[House members\] a call](#)” telling them to use the Congressional Review Act to save the Open Internet Order.”

Free Press, another key member of the pro-net neutrality coalition, said there is not a minute to lose and put it this way:

Victory in the Senate!

Now, we go on the House.

START NOW: Call your representatives and tell them to get on the right side of history. The momentum is in our favor! Help save [#NetNeutrality](#): <https://t.co/vDFg24dtAv> pic.twitter.com/2gvV2HB38Y

— Free Press (@freepress) [May 16, 2018](#)

“We’ve turned net neutrality into a mainstream issue for the first time ever,” declared Fight for the Future in their explainer. “And now we’re building a movement to make sure that we protect it for generations to come. The fight ahead is not going to be easy, but victory is within reach.”

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