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October 31, 2017

The Honorable Tom Marino
Chairman
House Judiciary Subcommittee on
Regulatory Reform, Commercial and
Antitrust Law
2242 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Cicilline
Ranking Member
House Judiciary Subcommittee on
Regulatory Reform, Commercial and
Antitrust Law
2244 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Marino and Ranking Member Cicilline:

On behalf of the more than 1.2 million members of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR), I want to express NAR's position on open internet rules in light of the Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law's November 1, 2017 hearing on net neutrality.

NAR strongly believes that open internet rules are necessary to support a wide range of common business practices that rely on the Internet and which have improved the ability of real estate professions to offer homebuyers and businesses the tools to efficiently make better informed decisions when looking for a new home or commercial site.

NAR supports network neutrality rules that protect American businesses and consumers by preventing Internet Service Providers (ISPs) not only from blocking, throttling, or discriminating against Internet traffic and prohibit paid prioritization arrangements, but also address interconnection issues and other anti-competitive practices covered by the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) general conduct rule. We urge you and your colleagues to oppose legislation and regulatory efforts that would threaten network neutrality and rollback important protections put in place by the FCC in 2015.

The Internet has been a driving force for innovation for decades, and our members, their customers, and local communities are benefiting from this innovation every day. The economic growth and job creation fueled by the open Internet is unprecedented in American economic history. This growth has been fostered by the FCC under both Republican and Democratic administrations for over a decade.

Our members, who identify themselves as REALTORS®, represent a wide variety of real estate industry professionals. REALTORS® have been early adopters of technology, and are industry innovators who understand that consumers today are seeking real estate information and services that are fast, convenient and comprehensive. Increasingly, technology innovations are driving the delivery of real estate services and the future of the real estate sales businesses.


Streaming video, Voice over Internet Protocol, cloud storage and mobile applications are commonly used in our businesses today. Without protections from the Open Internet Order, consumers may experience slow or degraded delivery of home search videos creating barriers in the very first step in the home buying process. In the future, new technologies, like virtual reality and telepresence among others, will be available that will no doubt require open internet access unencumbered by technical or financial discrimination.



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The benefits of broadband Internet for innovation and economic development are unparalleled. But the nation will lose those tremendous benefits if the Internet does not remain an open platform, where Americans can innovate without permission and with low barriers to launching small businesses and creating jobs. Given this reality, it is important that Congress work with the FCC to preserve open Internet policies that promote competition between Internet application and service providers. NAR remains ready to work with you on this important issue..

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William E. Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

William E. Brown

2017 President, National Association of REALTORS®

cc: Members of House Judiciary Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law