

NAR Issue Summaries

Technologies / Net Neutrality

NAR Committee:

Federal Technology Policy Committee

What is the fundamental issue?

REALTORS® support net neutrality, which requires that broadband networks be free of restrictions on content, sites, or platforms. Networks should not restrict the equipment nor modes of communication allowed on them. Networks should ensure that communication is not unreasonably degraded by other communication streams.

I am a real estate professional. What does this mean for my business?

The business of real estate has entered the digital age. Streaming video, virtual tours, AI, and social media are just some of the technologies that are commonly used by real estate professionals today. In the future, new technologies will be adopted which could require unencumbered network access.

Net neutrality is a policy debate about how internet service providers (ISPs) should manage internet traffic. Proponents of net neutrality believe ISPs should treat all data equally, preventing them from slowing down specific websites or charging extra for access to certain content.

NAR Policy:

Supports requiring broadband providers to adhere to net neutral practices:

1. Consumers are entitled to access the lawful Internet content of their choice;
2. Consumers are entitled to run applications and services of their choice, subject to the needs of law enforcement;
3. Consumers are entitled to connect their choice of legal devices that do not harm the network;
4. Consumers are entitled to competition among network providers, application and service providers, and content providers;
5. Network providers should not discriminate among internet data transmissions on the basis of the source of the transmission as they regulate the flow of network content;
6. Broadband providers must be transparent about the service they provide and how they run their network and;
7. These principles should apply to both wireless and wireline networks.

Opposition Arguments:

Opponents of network neutrality are concerned that excessive regulation will create a disincentive to invest in new or additional internet infrastructure, leading to poor service for consumers. Supporters counter that internet users should be in control of what content they view and what applications they use.

Legislative/Regulatory Status/Outlook

The FCC recently voted to strengthen net neutrality protections. On April 25th, they passed a 3-2 vote to reclassify internet access as a telecommunications service. This means it will be regulated under Title II of the Communications Act, which gives the FCC more power.

The FCC says this change will allow them to better:

- Protect national security
- Improve public safety
- Help consumers
- Encourage internet expansion
- Increase access to broadband

It's important to note that the FCC won't regulate internet providers like traditional utilities. Instead, they'll focus on creating new rules specifically for how internet traffic is handled.

These new rules were effective July 22, 2024.

Current Legislation/Regulation (bill number or regulation)

[FCC Announces Effective Date of Net Neutrality Order](#)

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