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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

TRUTH IN BROADBAND: MAYOR'S OFFICE ISSUES RFI TO PROMOTE OPEN AND TRANSPARENT INTERNET

Chief Technology Officer calls on experts to develop system to monitor internet service providers and disclose when they are engaging in discriminatory practices

NEW YORK—The Mayor's Office of the Chief Technology Officer today released a "Truth in Broadband" Request for Information (RFI) to establish transparency and accountability in how carriers provide internet service to consumers. The goal of the RFI is to gather input from industry and subject matter experts to help implement a system for monitoring the quality and performance of internet service providers.

The move comes as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) approved regulations that would repeal net neutrality protections and give internet service providers control over what content reaches customers and what customers can send to the internet.

"Making New York the fairest city in America means protecting the fundamental right to access an open internet," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "We are the first city to take this step as part of our plan to hold internet service providers accountable for discriminatory practices."

"We applaud the Mayor's initiative to collect and monitor data that will bring into focus what internet service providers are providing – and not providing -- to consumers," said **New York Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman**. "My office is committed to holding these providers accountable for their promises."

"An open internet for all – with no restrictions on quality or speed – is a fundamental component of a free and equal society," said **Council Speaker Corey Johnson**. "We remain committed to ensuring net neutrality. The 'Truth in Broadband' request will facilitate our work towards creating a more equitable city for all New Yorkers."

The [Mayor's Office of the Chief Technology Officer](#) is charged with implementing the Mayor's goal for universal broadband for all New Yorkers by 2025. The Truth in Broadband RFI builds on the NYC Connected RFI for Citywide Broadband and the Governors Island Connectivity Challenge, both of which are aimed at delivering new infrastructure and service. In July 2017,

Mayor de Blasio led a bipartisan coalition of 65 mayors in opposition to the reclassification of broadband as an information service.

The FCC has retreated from ensuring accountability and transparency of broadband providers. FCC Chairman Ajit Pai has proposed a lower speed standard for broadband and changes to how the FCC collects and reports data on broadband performance and availability. On December 14th, 2017 the FCC re-classified broadband as an information service and significantly reduced regulatory oversight of Internet Service Providers (“ISPs”). The move also repealed regulations requiring open internet practices. ISPs may now make discriminatory and self-serving decisions to slow or block some content for financial or political gain. In the new rules, ISPs are only required to self-disclose limited information about their network management practices, performance, and commercial terms.

Though reclassification will allow large internet service providers to block or throttle content at will, they say they do not plan to do so. Without monitored transparency, people cannot know if ISPs are honoring that claim.

Anyone can respond to the RFI. Responses to the Truth in Broadband RFI are due **February 28, 2018** and can be submitted at <http://on.nyc.gov/truthinbroadbandrfi>.

"Our commitment to universal, affordable, high-speed internet is a commitment to an open internet," said **Miguel Gamiño, Jr., New York City Chief Technology Officer**. "We're engaging the experts so that we can appropriately and boldly act to protect fair and equal access to the Internet for everyone, where the federal government will not."

"With the repeal of net neutrality, now is the time for everyone concerned with freedom of speech to come together in defense of a free and open internet. The Truth in Broadband effort seeks to take stock of New York City's vast network of experts in order to safeguard the future of information exchange," said **Council Member Peter Koo, Chair of the Committee on Technology**. "Many thanks to New York City Chief Technology Officer, Miguel Gamiño for spearheading this important effort"

"We must do everything we can to establish transparency and accountability of internet service providers, because our residents, businesses, and innovators in New York City depend on their adherence to an open internet," said **Anne Roest, Commissioner of the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications**. "I encourage New Yorkers to speak up and participate in shaping a first-of-its kind effort that will change the way carriers are held accountable for their service."

"In today's tech-centered world, it is imperative that the over 230,000 small businesses that drive our local economy have fair and equal web access in order to connect with customers," said **Gregg Bishop, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Small Business Services**. "This is an important step in counteracting the Federal Communications Commission's disappointing decision to repeal net neutrality regulations."

"The internet must be accessible and affordable for everyone in Brooklyn and beyond. I commend CTO Gamiño for leading this effort to establish accountability and transparency

between our internet service providers and the customers they serve,” said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams**. “As we collectively respond to the irresponsible repeal of net neutrality regulations, we must amplify our work to ensure every resident of your diverse borough has equitable access to information through reliable and unobstructed broadband service.”

“The FCC has walked away from protecting the open internet and protecting consumers, and I applaud the City for looking for ways to step up and provide transparency for consumers,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. “If it falls to local government to find ways to get consumers information and hold service providers accountable, then that’s what we need to do.”

“New York State and New York City are committed to ensuring an open Internet for all New Yorkers. The Mayor understands that universal and affordable access to high-speed Internet is no longer a luxury. We will continue to fight against the federal government’s movement away net neutrality,” said **Assemblyman Clyde Vanel**, Chairman of the Assembly Subcommittee on Internet and New Technologies.

"Fair and equal access to the internet is critical to ensure everyone's ability to express their views, access services, and get information," said **Donna Lieberman, Executive Director of The New York Civil Liberties Union**. “We need more accountability and transparency to ensure that internet service providers are serving all New Yorkers equally.”

"Internet access is crucial for everyone in modern society -- for everything from political speech and community news to educational opportunities and economic empowerment. New York lawmakers have been at the forefront when it comes to protecting their constituents' rights to get what they pay for from ISPs: a fast, reliable and nondiscriminatory pathway to the internet," said **Matt Wood, Policy Director for Free Press**. “This work is just as important now as ever, especially in light of the threats to internet openness and broadband affordability from the Trump FCC's attacks on Net Neutrality, Lifeline, and other important communications rights.”

"We are grateful for the leadership of Mayor de Blasio and CTO Gamiño in collecting information from ISPs in New York City. Only through data requests like New York's Truth in Broadband Request for Information can citizens know for certain the commitments broadband providers are making regarding net neutrality," said **Chris Lewis, Vice President at Public Knowledge**. “Some ISPs have already begun to walk back from full net neutrality commitments, but consumers have a right to know the details about the services they purchase, especially when many Americans have only one choice for high speed broadband access.”

"The FCC, under the leadership of Ajit Pai has repeatedly promised that broadband providers will ship better products and services to consumers under the new order - this proposal will demonstrate if he was right or wrong," said **Mark Surman, Executive Director of the Mozilla Foundation**.

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