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**MAYORS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY JOIN MAYOR DE BLASIO IN SIGNING
THE CITIES OPEN INTERNET PLEDGE DEDICATED TO PROTECTING NET
NEUTRALITY**

Coalition Launches mayorsfornetneutrality.org To Encourage Other Cities To Join

NEW YORK— Today, Mayor de Blasio, joined by 11 mayors and city leaders from across the country, signed on to the Cities Open Internet Pledge in coordinated resistance to the federal government's repeal of net-neutrality protections. The pledge encourages cities to use their local authority to protect net-neutrality. Mayors Steve Adler (Austin, TX), Ted Wheeler (Portland, OR), Mark Farrell (San Francisco, CA), Jacob Frey (Minneapolis, MN), Sly James (Kansas City, MO), Sam Liccardo (San Jose, CA), Ron Nirenberg (San Antonio, TX), Catherine Pugh (Baltimore, MD), Barney Seney (Putnam, CT), Paul Soglin (Madison, WI) and Chair Zach Friend (Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors) all signed on.

"Corporate greed is the only reason net neutrality is gone. To help even the playing field, New York City is going to hit companies in the only place they seem to feel it: their bottom line," said **Mayor de Blasio**. "When the federal government fails to protect consumers, cities must band together to take action. New York City is leading the charge by establishing the Cities Open Internet Pledge."

In December 2017, the Federal Communications Commission repealed net neutrality rules that ensured that all internet traffic be treated equal. By overturning the net neutrality protections, Internet Service Providers can now slow down or charge customers more to access certain websites.

Twelve cities have signed on to the pledge below:

Cities Open Internet Pledge

Over the past two decades, cities have increased their presence on the internet to provide information and services to constituents. In that time, conducting business online has gone from an amenity to a necessity. Cities have come to rely on the internet as an open medium with the assurance that a service provider will deliver a resident's request for government content just the

same as they deliver any other content. The Federal Communications Commission's recent repeal of its Open Internet order violates that principle. Cities cannot allow private internet service providers to be the gatekeeper between our residents and the local government services on which they depend every day.

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 on the internet. To that end, to the extent permitted by law and within our control, we will:

- 1. Procure applicable internet services from companies that do not block, throttle, or provide paid prioritization of content on sites that cities run to provide critical services and information to their residents.*
- 2. Ensure an open internet connection with any free or subsidized service we offer to our residents.*
- 3. Not block, throttle or engage in paid prioritization when providing internet service directly to our residents, such as through free public Wi-Fi or municipal broadband.*
- 4. To the extent permitted, require clear and accessible notices of filtering, blocking and prioritization policies with enforceable penalties for violations to protect consumers from deceptive practices.*
- 5. Monitor the practices of internet service providers so consumers and regulators can know when a company is violating open internet principles or commitments.*
- 6. Encourage consumer use of ISPs, including municipal options that abide by open internet policies.*

Today also marks the launch of mayorsforinternetneutrality.org, a website where constituents can ask their local leaders to join the pledge.

The de Blasio administration has already taken important steps to preserving net neutrality by incorporating net neutrality provisions into the LinkNYC franchise and issuing a "Truth in Broadband" RFI to evaluate in real-time how carriers provide internet service to consumers and to identify if they are engaging in anti-net neutrality practices.

Additionally, to fulfill the goals of the pledge New York City will:

- Review its Master Service Agreements and other agreements with Internet Service Providers to determine open internet policies can potentially be incorporated.
- Evaluate all of the City's free Wi-Fi and other partnerships with Internet Service Providers to determine if they are compliant with open internet policies.
- Evaluate the publicly available consumer terms of service from Internet Service Providers to determine how they meet our principles and what consumer protection and consumer education steps we can take to increase transparency and accountability.

"Portland is leading the way. In the face of a federal government that is shirking its responsibilities, and a state government beset by budget deficits, our City is innovating to address the key issues of our time." said **Mayor Ted Wheeler of Portland, Oregon.**

"An open internet gives startups reliable access to the lifeblood of a tech company. Repealing net neutrality hurts our entrepreneurs' ability to realize ideas and get them to consumers, and it would be bad news for Austin's tech scene and our job market," said **Mayor Steve Adler of Austin, Texas.**

"Net Neutrality and the protections it provides our residents and businesses are vital to ensuring a fair and open Internet for all," said **Mayor Mark Farrell of San Francisco, California.** "I want to thank Mayor De Blasio for taking the lead on the Cities Open Internet Pledge, and I am fully committed to having San Francisco follow through on the pledge."

"Net neutrality is essential to our ability to compete in the marketplace of ideas, apply for a job, learn new skills, access government services, and connect with friends and neighbors. By signing this pledge, my office is committing to do what we can to protect the fundamental rights of our residents to a free and open internet, said **Mayor Jacob Frey of Minneapolis, Minnesota.**

"A truly open and fair Internet ignites innovation, breaks down barriers and brings communities together," said **Zach Friend, Chair of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors.** "Net neutrality ensures that communities like ours can continue to foster a culture of entrepreneurship and economic vitality."

"I signed the Open Internet Pledge Initiative because net neutrality is integral to creating digital inclusion in Kansas City," said **Mayor Sly James of Kansas City, Missouri.** "Without net neutrality, many Kansas Citians could be excluded from the digital economy, which is becoming a larger and larger chunk of the economy at large, and deprived of the opportunity to be a part of their community"

"I'm proud to sign the Mayor's Pledge for Net Neutrality — especially as it becomes apparent that the industry-laden FCC is incapable of acting in the public's best interest," said **Mayor Sam Liccardo of San Jose, California.** "Together, we have a responsibility to protect the open, free, and fair internet that is imperative to innovation, growth, and bridging the digital divide."

"A free internet critical to preventing the digital divide from growing in San Antonio and around the nation," said **Mayor Ron Nirenberg of San Antonio, Texas.** "Americans of all economic levels must have unencumbered access to this essential tool."

"I enthusiastically join the Mayor's Pledge for Net Neutrality. If we lose Net Neutrality we lose the right to choose which sites we browse and instead cede control to companies that have their own agendas," said **Mayor Catherine Pugh of Baltimore, Maryland.** "Net Neutrality prohibits Internet providers from blocking, throttling, and paid prioritization of subscribers. Along with my colleagues across the country, I urge that we keep the Internet free, fair and fully accessible to all."

"Net neutrality is so important for new business development within our entrepreneurial community. They must be given a fair start in order to someday finish big," said **Mayor Barney Seney of Putnam, Connecticut**.

"From ensuring a healthy local economy to our nation's international competitiveness, net neutrality is a must," said **Mayor Paul Soglin of Madison, Wisconsin**.

"An open internet is the cornerstone to a fair and inclusive city that protects access to opportunity for everyone," said **Miguel Gamiño, Jr., New York City Chief Technology Officer**. "With this pledge, cities are empowered to defend the rights of their constituents to fairly access the internet for the information and services they rely on in everyday life."

"A free and open internet fosters innovation, competition and growth for our economy," said **Samir Saini, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications**. "We reject the position that what you can access on the internet depends on what you're willing to pay. We stand with cities across the country against the repeal of net neutrality and we won't stop fighting to keep the internet free from blocking, throttling, and preferential treatment."

"By repealing net neutrality rules, the Trump administration has opened the door to a world where your internet access provider can manipulate how fast you send and receive data depending on what's in it, where it's going, or who it's coming from. It opens the door to price discrimination and extra fees, and it is a nightmare both for consumers and for American tech jobs," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. "It's critical that local and state governments explore every possible strategy to preserve the fair, open internet tech businesses and everyday consumers rely on."

"The Open Internet Pledge reaffirms our commitment to the idea that an open and accessible internet is a contemporary necessity to maintaining the public good. Cities across the country are coming together in defense of this ideal, and New Yorkers will proudly step up to protect this modern day necessity," said **City Council Member Peter Koo, Chair of the Technology Committee**.

"It was a dark day for consumers when the FCC repealed Net Neutrality," said **City Council Member Justin Brannan**. "Fortunately, smart local governments can step in and preserve an open internet for all. I applaud the mayors who are signing the open internet pledge. I too pledge to do everything possible in the city council to protect net neutrality."

"Town by town, city by city, local leaders are taking back everyone's right to connect and communicate via an open internet," said **Timothy Karr, Senior Director of Strategy for Free Press**. "By signing the Cities Open Internet Pledge, mayors are posing a direct challenge to the FCC's unpopular decision to gut Net Neutrality protections. They're saying that access to an open internet is vital to the livelihood of cities and their inhabitants. If bureaucrats in Washington, D.C. won't protect Net Neutrality, mayors are obligated to step up for the people they represent and put in place the open internet safeguards that are essential to a healthy democracy."

"In the face of the recklessness of the Trump administration, city leaders like Mayor de Blasio are forging a united front to protect an open internet," said **Donna Lieberman, Executive Director of NYCLU**. "Access to information over the web is essential to our daily lives, to a healthy democracy and an open New York. We hope other cities follow their example."

"Demand Progress and our members are proud to support the Cities Open Internet Pledge. People across the country -- of all parties -- overwhelmingly support net neutrality. This is easy for local elected officials, with ears close to the ground, to recognize. And in defiance of Big Cable and the Washington policymakers whom that industry has captured, local officials are making it clear that they are willing to take meaningful action to push back, and to ensure that institutions and people retain a modicum of access to an open internet," said **David Segal, Executive Director of Demand Progress**.

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