

AT&T ad campaign calls for 'net neutrality' law

January 26 2018, by Levi Sumagaysay, The Mercury News

AT&T, a beneficiary of the FCC's repeal of net neutrality rules, is urging Congress to write a federal net neutrality law.

In full-page ads in major U.S. newspapers Wednesday, CEO Randall Stephenson calls for an "internet bill of rights—and says tech giants should be regulated, too.

Stephenson says AT&T doesn't block or censor websites, nor does it throttle, discriminate or "degrade network performance based on content." He did not mention paid prioritization—the creation of fast lanes.

He also says that as technology continues to advance, we need an internet bill of rights that "applies to all internet companies and guarantees neutrality, transparency, openness, non-discrimination and privacy protection for all internet users."

Before the FCC voted in December to repeal net neutrality rules adopted in 2015, the big [telecom companies](#) insisted that they support net neutrality, the principle that all internet traffic should be treated equally.

But anyone who has followed the history of net neutrality knows the telecom giants' actions over the years have shown otherwise. For example, the FCC proposed a \$100 million fine against AT&T in 2015, accusing it of throttling what supposedly was unlimited data.

"Internet activists have been warning for months that the big ISPs plan has always been to gut the rules at the FCC and then use the 'crisis' they created to ram through bad legislation in the name of 'saving' [net neutrality](#)," Evan Greer, campaign director of Fight for the Future, said in a statement Wednesday.

"We had an internet bill of rights," Greer said. "It was called Title II and AT&T's army of lobbyists did everything in their power to burn it down." Net [neutrality](#) rules classified broadband providers as telecom companies under Title II of the Telecommunications Act.

As for Stephenson's call for internet companies to be regulated like telecom companies, critics of equating the two industries have long pointed out that no matter how dominant tech companies such as Google and Facebook might be, the telecom companies control the pipes that [internet](#) traffic travels through.

©2018 The Mercury News (San Jose, Calif.)
Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Citation: AT&T ad campaign calls for 'net neutrality' law (2018, January 26) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-01-att-ad-campaign-net-neutrality.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--