US senator attacks '.sucks' web address plans (Update)
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A high-ranking US senator urged Internet regulators Wednesday to pull the plug on a proposed online neighborhood for website addresses ending in ".sucks."

Senator John (Jay) Rockefeller argued in a letter to the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers that such an Internet zone aimed to compel companies to buy addresses for the sole purpose of preventing someone from using them and potentially discredit a brand's name.

"I view it as little more than a predatory shakedown scheme," the chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee said in a letter addressed to the head of ICANN's board of directors.

Any benefit from such a new generic Top Level Domain (gTLD) would be far outweighed by its potential to be used to "defame" individuals, non-profit organizations and businesses, Rockefeller said.

California-based ICANN says the huge expansion...
companies to pay recurring fees to avoid having ".sucks" appended to their names in website addresses.

One contender for running the domain is offering pre-registration of website names for $2,500, with a warning that the price will leap 10-fold when it is close to opening, according to the senator.

ICANN did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

More than 100 new gTLDs have cleared hurdles to reach registries.

"This is a historic milestone for ICANN's new gTLD program and the Internet as a whole," vice president of gTLD operations Christine Willett said in January.

"The year ahead will be defined by new opportunities in a vastly expanding online landscape."

The expansion of domain addresses is not just limited to the Roman script.

Online neighborhoods with addresses ending in the Chinese word for "game;" the Arabic words for "web" or "network," or the Cyrillic word for "online" were cleared last year and more are to follow suit.

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