



Statement on FCC Chairman Genachowski's proposal on Net Neutrality rules

An open Internet needs to extend to wireless devices; should not allow "pay to play" content tiers

Minneapolis, Minn. Dec. 7, 2010 – Main Street Project has been cautiously optimistic about FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski's intentions to proceed with the implementation of Net Neutrality rules. We applaud the steps the Chairman has taken up to now in moving towards a policy of Net Neutrality. However, in his December 1 remarks, Chairman Genachowski laid out proposal for a compromise on Net Neutrality, setting up a crucial December 21 vote at the FCC.

Our assessment is that the plan falls short of his earlier promise to keep the Internet an open and neutral communications platform.

According to his remarks, the protections afforded under rules of Net Neutrality would not be extended to wireless technology. Furthermore it also leaves open the possibility for a "pay to play" scheme in which Internet service providers could prioritize certain content over others based on the willingness of Web sites and companies to pay for that preferential treatment.

"The openness of the Internet must be protected; strong Net Neutrality rules accomplish that," said Steven Renderos, Media Justice Program Director at Main Street Project. "However, rules will only be effective if they protect our total Internet experience and don't make a distinction between connecting through a computer or with our cell phones."

Main Street Project is a grassroots media justice, economic development and community building organization. We work to help give community residents of all ages, cultures, place, economic and immigration status the opportunity to more fully participate in all aspects of community life. Learn more at mainstreetproject.org.