

November 24, 2017

The Honourable Navdeep Bains, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development
Confederation Building
Suite: 356
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6



Dear Minister:

I am writing you on behalf of the 370,000 members of the National Union of Public and General Employees, one of Canada's largest trade unions, regarding the issue of net neutrality.

Canada is a large country with incredible diversity in its geography and peoples. We have a few large urban centres and a wide range of small, and even remote, communities. In the context of such a large country with a geographically dispersed population, fast and accessible forms of communication are essential.

Telecommunications policy affects almost every aspect of our society. This includes supporting the social fabric of our nation as well as our economic well-being.

The introduction of the internet and broadband communications has connected Canadians with each other and the world in ways previously only ever dreamed of. The economic importance of the internet for Canadians cannot be overstated.

It is for this reason that the National Union has taken a long-standing position in defense of network neutrality. A level playing field for internet access is something that benefits all Canadians. We strongly support your government's April announcement to strengthen net neutrality rules in Canada.

However, we are deeply concerned by the U.S. Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) announcement that they are intending to repeal their 2015 ruling on net neutrality, enacted under the Obama administration. This could have a significant impact on Canada's telecommunications.



It is also likely that we will see in Canada growing corporate-backed pressure to relax or undermine net neutrality here. There is a powerful and well-financed group of forces poised to make just such a push.

This letter is to urge your government to resist this pressure. The government of Canada needs to take a stand in defense of the majority of internet users to maintain equal access to internet sites and services, and to support our new and developing industries by opposing the implementation of two-tiered access to internet services.

I would also encourage you to raise Canada's concerns with your U.S. counterparts about the FCC's move to repeal net neutrality. In an interconnected world, allowing large companies to control internet access for the many is unacceptable.

I want to thank you for your time and consideration. If you should have any further questions about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Larry Brown', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Larry Brown
President

cc: Elisabeth Ballermann, Secretary-Treasurer
National Executive Board