



## RESOLUTION URGING CONGRESS TO PROTECT OPEN INTERNET PRINCIPLES

**Committee:** Technology

**Resolution:** TEC-17-01

1. **WHEREAS**, the National Organization of Black Elected Legislative (NOBEL)
2. Women) recognizes that the internet has transformed American life for the better,
3. creating new economic, cultural, educational, and civic opportunities for members
4. of the Hispanic community; and
5. **WHEREAS**, protecting the openness of the internet is vital to continued
6. innovation, economic advancement, and the free expression of all Americans,
7. including organizers and activists working to advance the rights and opportunities
8. of the African American community; and
9. **WHEREAS**, the persistence of a “digital divide” has denied many Americans –
10. including a disproportionate number of African Americans – full participation in
11. the economic, educational, and civic opportunities enabled by access to the
12. internet; and
13. **WHEREAS**, one key pathway to solve this “digital divide” is continued and
14. increased investment in broadband network deployment, especially in rural and
15. low-income areas, which depends on public policies that encourage rather than
16. discourage greater network investment; and

17. **WHEREAS**, another key tool to close the “digital divide” are public-private  
18. partnerships that give low-income families access to free or low cost broadband  
19. service, digital literacy training, and educational tools; and  
20. **WHEREAS**, in 2015, in a well-intentioned but poorly designed effort to protect  
21. the internet’s openness, the FCC abandoned a two-decade long bipartisan  
22. consensus and unreasonably reclassified broadband as a Title II  
23. “telecommunications service” generally used for public utilities such as wireline  
24. telephones; and  
25. **WHEREAS**, this reclassification is likely to discourage investment and  
26. innovation and slow the deployment of high-speed broadband networks by  
27. introducing significantly greater risks and uncertainties into the internet  
28. ecosystem; and  
29. **WHEREAS**, this reclassification rests on a determination by the FCC, not the  
30. will of Congress, and is therefore subject to reconsideration and reversal by  
31. subsequent FCC administrations, leaving open internet protections at considerable  
32. risk and exposure to the changing winds of politics; and  
33. **WHEREAS**, in 1999, FCC Chairman Bill Kennard stated the best decision  
34. government ever made with respect to the Internet was the decision that the FCC  
35. had previously made 15 years prior NOT to impose regulation on it, and  
36. **WHEREAS**, in 2010, the FCC under Chairman Julius Genachowski enacted rules  
37. that would protect the internet’s openness by prohibiting network providers from  
38. blocking sites, throttling traffic, or otherwise unreasonably discriminating in their

39. treatment of data on their networks, but courts subsequently ruled that these rules  
40. were insufficiently grounded in statutory authority; and  
41. **WHEAREAS**, in 2010, U.S. Representative Henry Waxman introduced  
42. legislation to enshrine those same open internet protections in statute, solving the  
43. jurisdictional problem faced by the FCC and including prohibitions against  
44. blocking, throttling and unreasonable discrimination; and  
45. **WHEAREAS**, a legislative solution would permanently enshrine open internet  
46. protections in federal statute without the uncertainty, reversibility, or  
disincentives  
47. to investment that are the hallmarks of Title II reclassification;  
48. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the NOBEL Women calls upon Members  
of  
49. Congress of the United States to enact Net Neutrality legislation along the lines of  
50. the FCC's 2010 Open Internet order and principles of Representative Waxman's  
51. 2010 legislation; and  
52. **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, the NOBEL Women shall send a copy of this  
53. resolution to the President of the United States, the Members of the Senate  
54. Subcommittee .on Communications, Technology and the Internet, the Members of  
55. the House Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, and the  
56. Commissioners of the Federal Communications Commission.

**Sponsored By:** Rep. Laura Hall (AL)