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January 4, 2010

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**David Honig
President and Executive Director
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Dear Chairman Genachowski:

RE: Proposal: Staff Workshop and Field Hearing on Network Neutrality and the Digital Divide
GN Docket No. 09-191

The Asian American Justice Center, Hispanic Technology and Telecommunications Partnership, League of United Latin American Citizens, National Black Caucus of State Legislators, National Conference of Black Mayors, National Organization of Black County Officials, National Organization of Black Elected Legislative Women, and Women in Municipal Government (“Civil Rights Organizations and Elected Officials”) are very pleased to learn that the Commission is embarking on a series of workshops on net neutrality. Thus it is a privilege to offer for your consideration the attached proposal for a staff workshop and a field hearing that would address the impact of net neutrality regulation on the digital divide. This proposal is offered in the spirit of Advisory Committee on Diversity’s December 3, 2009 unanimous resolution, “The FCC’s Obligation to Close the Digital Divide”, which concludes:

Specifically, the Advisory Committee recommends that in the agency’s National Broadband Plan, Network Neutrality and Spectrum Policy proceedings, among others, the Commission should analyze in detail the anticipated effects of rule or policy changes on the digital divide, and craft any new rules and policies in a manner that ensures, to the extent possible, that these rules and policies will be instrumental in closing the digital divide.

The Civil Rights Organizations and Elected Officials specifically recommend that the proposed workshop and field hearing be convened in at the earliest possible date, so that any issues flagged there can promptly be considered by the staff.

These forums should include perspectives of those who believe that the NPRM’s net neutrality proposals would close the divide, and those who maintain that some aspects of net neutrality would widen the divide.

We would be glad to meet with you or your staff and to offer any assistance we can in connection with the proposed forums.

Sincerely,

David Honig
Counsel for Civil Rights Organizations and Elected Officials

Attachment (Proposal)

cc: Hon. Michael Copps
Hon. Robert McDowell
Hon. Mignon Clyburn
Hon. Meredith Attwell Baker