



Press Release

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Forty-Two National Minority Organizations Urge the FCC to Refocus its Broadband Policies while Exercising Section 706 Authority to Continue to Protect the Open Internet

Washington, D.C. (July 21, 2014): The Minority Media and Telecommunications Council (MMTC), with a coalition of 42 highly respected national civil rights, social service, and professional organizations (“National Minority Organizations”), submitted Comments to the FCC urging the Commission to focus its broadband policies on promoting engagement, adoption, and informed broadband use by communities of color, and to exercise its Section 706 authority to protect all consumers’ rights to an open Internet.

While unequivocally supporting an open Internet, the National Minority Organizations recognize ongoing civil rights challenges associated with access to broadband, adoption, and digital literacy. Broadband access, adoption, and digital literacy are essential to living a life of equal opportunity in the 21st century. Without broadband, low-income and middle-class Americans – and particularly people of color – cannot gain new skills, secure good jobs, obtain a quality education, or participate in our digital society.

The National Minority Organizations urged the Commission to prioritize a policy agenda that advances first class digital citizenship and stimulates investment in broadband infrastructure. Thus, the coalition urged the Commission to avoid Title II reclassification, stating that if strong consumer protections are adopted and enforced, and a presumption against paid prioritization is adopted, Section 706 would be well suited to meet the goals of the Commission and communities of color. Communities of color continue to under-adopt broadband for reasons that include availability, affordability, relevance, and digital literacy. The coalition concluded that Title II regulation, with its monopoly telephone-era directives, is not the path to a continued vibrant, growing, innovative, job-creating, and empowering open Internet.

“Ensuring that every American has access to broadband is one of the most critical civil rights challenges of the 21st century. Any regulatory framework that does not emphasize broadband adoption, competition, and innovation would be detrimental to communities of color. Faced with important choices in this proceeding, the Commission should focus its broadband policies on promoting engagement, adoption, and informed broadband use by people of color, seniors, rural, and low income families stranded without broadband access. The agency can use Section 706 to ensure that all Americans retain the right to an open Internet without widening the digital divide in the process, and it should establish an accessible, affordable, and expedited procedure for resolution of complaints,” they said.

The full filing is available [here](#).

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About MMTC:

The Minority Media and Telecommunications Council (MMTC) is a non-partisan, national nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and preserving equal opportunity and civil rights in the mass media, telecommunications and broadband industries, and closing the digital divide. MMTC is generally recognized as the nation's leading advocate for minority advancement in communications.