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Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

May 23, 2017

Ajit V. Pai
Chair
Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chair Pai:

I write with alarm regarding the Federal Communication Commission's recent vote to start the process of unwinding net neutrality protections and reverse the classification of mobile and home internet service providers as common carriers under Title II of the Communications Act. I urge you to reconsider these changes. The nation's burgeoning tech businesses depend on the 'open internet' environment fostered by the current regulatory structure. Net neutrality policies are vital to continued American leadership in the rapidly-evolving online business and services sectors.

The flourishing tech hubs in San Francisco and Silicon Valley are well-known, but New York City's central borough of Manhattan, which I represent, is also quickly becoming one of the strongest startup environments in the United States. The NY Tech Alliance, a membership organization that covers the full spectrum of the greater New York area tech community, has over 60,000 individual and institutional members and continues to grow.

These businesses and innovators depend on equal access to the internet, where they are charged for the amount of data they can upload and download regardless of the type of data or that data's point of origin or destination. And contrary to the assertions of some large internet service providers, there is no evidence that preserving net neutrality has reduced their incentive to invest in infrastructure.

However, allowing internet service providers to price-discriminate based on 'what kind of data goes through the pipe' rather than simply 'the size of the pipe' will make our country a dramatically less attractive environment for investment and job creation in the tech sector.

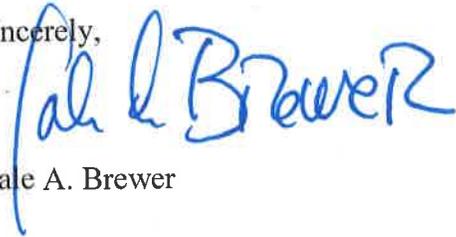
Consider this: after the 2012 passage of the municipal Open Data Law I authored as a member of the New York City Council, newly-available government datasets fueled the growth of an entire

ecosystem of 'civic tech' innovators, with millions of end users and thousands of jobs. But that ecosystem could not have sprouted if individual civic hackers and small businesses had not had equal access to the internet at reasonable rates.

Small businesses are potent innovators and job creators. The decision to reverse the Title II classification and eliminate net neutrality will harm much of this small tech sector investment, growth, and productivity, threatening the hundreds of thousands of jobs it provides. The foreseeable outcome of this policy will be to force one of our most promising growth sectors to move offshore where access-to-service costs are already lower. We have seen the devastating flight of manufacturing jobs overseas, and we should not seek to repeat this in the tech sector by stifling competition and making internet access, the key public utility of the digital age, more complicated and more expensive for small businesses and innovators.

I strongly urge you to reconsider the course you and the Federal Communications Commission have set with respect to net neutrality. Abandoning the open internet will benefit a few telecommunications giants at the expense of the entire nation's competitiveness in the digital economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gale A. Brewer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Gale" is written with a large, sweeping initial "G". The last name "Brewer" is written in a similar cursive style. The signature is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Gale A. Brewer