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Bloomberg

Atlantic Broadband said it has completed the purchase of FiberLight LLC's South Florida fiber network, a deal that will significantly increase the cable operator's high-speed fiber footprint in the state. Atlantic Broadband first announced the FiberLight deal in January. The deal, adds 350 fiber route miles to the cable company's existing South Florida network, roughly doubling its footprint in that part of the state while increasing its ability to serve data center customers in that are by about 30%.

"As the region grows and more businesses enter, we are excited that we can now offer this expanded fiber network," Atlantic Broadband CEO Rich Shea said in a statement. "Through this strategic partnership, we are giving businesses the ability to innovate, grow and contribute to the region's economic growth - a commitment that we've made to South Florida and all the geographies we operate in." The latest deal comes on the heels of a series of transactions over the past few years, including the purchase of MetroCast Cable Systems in January, which enabled Atlantic Broadband to offer a diverse footprint extending up the East Coast from Florida to Maine. – **Multichannel News**

Comcast said it had secured over 75 percent of Sky's shares, bringing it closer to finalizing the \$40 billion takeover of the British pay TV

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[Editorial: Step up, Gov. Wolf. Hold another debate with Scott Wagner](#)

group. The U.S. cable company, parent of NBCUniversal and CNBC, has previously said it hoped the acquisition would complete by the end of October.

Last month, Comcast emerged triumphant in the long-running battle for Sky after it beat Rupert Murdoch's Twenty-First Century Fox in an auction. Comcast said in a regulatory filing on Thursday that by Oct. 9 when its acquisition of Twenty-First Century Fox's 39 percent stake completes, it will hold or have received acceptances in respect of over 75 percent of Sky's share capital. The company said a further announcement will be made in due course. – **CNBC**

Moments after Gov. Jerry Brown's office announced that he had signed a bill to restore net neutrality protections in California that the federal government abandoned, the U.S. Department of Justice sued to block the measure from going into effect. California lawmakers saw the measure (Senate Bill 822) as an important step to protect internet users in the state; the Justice Department saw it as yet another effort by the loony left state to dictate policy for the entire country.

The feds argue that the Federal Communications Commission, not the states, decides how the internet will be regulated (or not regulated). And having a uniform national policy on internet issues would indeed be a good thing. But that uniform policy should be one that preserves the status quo, protecting both consumers and the companies that offer content and services online from interference by local broadband providers such as AT&T, Spectrum and Comcast.

Last year, the FCC's Republican majority went about as far as humanly possible in the other direction. It not only repealed a net neutrality rule the commission's previous Democratic majority had adopted in 2015, it said the FCC had no authority to regulate broadband providers beyond requiring them to disclose accurately how well their networks perform, how much they charge and how they manage their networks.

The move renounced the commission's efforts over the previous decade to crack down on broadband providers that improperly favored some content, services or applications on their networks over others. The FCC's action was particularly galling in light of the near-monopoly control that many broadband providers enjoy in their local markets. Typically, consumers have two options at most for the ultra-high-speed connections demanded by high-definition video streaming, online gaming and numerous other applications. If a broadband provider decides to impose fees that tilt the online playing field in favor of established, deep-pocketed content and service providers, their customers may have little or no way to escape this warped version of the internet.

That's one reason California enacted SB 822, which bars broadband providers from blocking, throttling or otherwise discriminating against legal content and services online, effective in January 2019. Although it drew most of its provisions from the 2015 FCC rules, it went further in a few areas, most notably barring wireless broadband providers such as Verizon and T-Mobile from favoring their own sites and online services when charging for broadband data use.

Bear in mind that while the internet is global, the broadband services that connect consumers to the net are local, involving a set of wires (and, for wireless users, antennas and transmitters on poles) in each community being served. States have long overseen local telecommunications services offered to the public, while the federal government had jurisdiction over interstate ones. The issue here is the FCC's declaration that broadband access is not like a local phone line but like voice mail, internet calling or online fax services, which only the federal government may regulate.

The legal battle is going to hinge on that declaration, which the commission contends preempts states from setting rules even as the FCC claims it has no authority of its own to regulate broadband providers. And it may be the case that federal telecommunication law overrides the state's traditional power to protect consumers buying local services.

But we reached this point because Congress has repeatedly refused to set a clear national policy promoting net neutrality and ordering the FCC to preserve it. That's why net neutrality rules and enforcement actions have been tied up in the courts for years - including the FCC's decision last year to all but deregulate broadband services. Although they differ on some details, broadband providers, tech companies and consumer advocates all agree that the smart way forward is for Congress to enshrine net neutrality into federal law. Until it does, states like California are right to test the boundaries of their authority to protect internet users. — **Los Angeles Times editorial**

Officials who oversee voting in Pennsylvania on Wednesday promoted ways for people living overseas to obtain absentee ballots after some encountered computer barriers set up to prevent meddling with elections. The Department of State outlined new procedures the same day The Philadelphia Inquirer reported instructions for overseas voters had led some voters to an online dead-end. Those who are unable to obtain a ballot should call a toll-free number or email the agency's help desk, where staff has been bolstered to address the problem.

Department of State communications director Wanda Murren said it was not clear how many people ran into the cyber barrier, but that it did not affect all overseas ballot applicants. She said officials realized they had a problem within the past couple weeks and instituted changes Monday, as they also notified about 4,000 people who had already requested to receive their ballots electronically about the new procedures. Murren said the problem relates to a security upgrade put in place as part of the state's response to concerns about meddling in the 2016 U.S. election.

A spokesman for Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf said he endorsed the Department of State's approach. "The governor is satisfied that there is a process in place that balances the need for increased security from international threats to our voting systems with ensuring citizens overseas can easily obtain their ballots," said the spokesman, J.J. Abbott. Four years ago, the state sent out more than 7,200 ballots to Pennsylvanians stationed with the military or otherwise living in foreign countries. — **Allentown Morning Call**

Alex Trebek, the Jeopardy! host roundly **criticized** for his Monday night performance as moderator of the lone Pennsylvania gubernatorial debate this fall, apologized Wednesday, saying he had "failed to recognize the seriousness of the event for the voters."

In a three-paragraph statement, Trebek said he was "naive" and "misunderstood" his role. "I thought that as moderator, I was to provide a certain light-hearted approach while still being able to challenge the candidates on their record or positions," he wrote. "I didn't realize I was to ask a simple question and then let the gentlemen go at each other."

While debate moderators typically ask questions and let the candidates talk, Trebek spoke at length — at times sharing his own policy opinions — during **the 45-minute debate** in Hershey between Gov. Wolf, a Democrat, and Republican Scott Wagner. Frustration over Trebek's performance was compounded by the fact that Wolf, the front-runner, has refused to participate in more debates. Monday's debate was hosted by the state Chamber of Business and Industry and broadcast by Pennsylvania Cable Network.

Before the debate, Trebek, a 78-year-old Canadian American who has been the face of the game show for a quarter-century, ruminated in a fireside chat about his ties to the state. He said he was a fan of the 1960s Eagles championship team, and credited a Pennsylvania businessman — the president of Pep Boys — with introducing him to the woman who later became his wife. In his mea culpa Wednesday, Trebek wrote: "I offer my sincere apologies to the people of Pennsylvania, a state I dearly love." — *Philadelphia Inquirer*

