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[Washington Post](#)  
[FCC commissioner, New York attorney general call for delay of net neutrality vote over fake comments](#)

[Reuters](#)  
[YouTube to expand teams reviewing extremist content](#)

[Minneapolis Star Tribune](#)  
[Op-ed from Minnesota State Rep. Paul Thissen \(D\): Help Minnesota protect](#)

New York attorney general Eric Schneiderman, FCC commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel, and 28 senators want the FCC to delay its upcoming net neutrality vote, giving investigators more time to look into a spate of fake public comments submitted under real peoples' names. They also called on

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the FCC to seriously investigate the source of the comments, and to cooperate with state- or federal-level probes. The FCC is set to repeal net neutrality in [a vote on December 14th](#), but its comment period — which is meant to give the public a voice in the process — has been beset with problems. Among other things, Schneiderman cited a Broadband for America-funded study **that found** nearly 8 million comments had been submitted using temporary or disposable email addresses, and nearly 10 million comments involved duplicate email and home addresses.

Schneiderman alleged that over 1 million total Americans have had their identities used to submit fake comments, and at least 50,000 New Yorkers have — including his own office's assistant press secretary, Rachel Shippee. His office recently [posted a page](#) where visitors can flag fake comments,

[consumers from private data grabs by internet and telecom giants](#)

[Philadelphia Inquirer Pa.'s political map rigged for GOP, says lawyer in gerrymandering case](#)

[Centre Daily Times Pennsylvania officials address sexual harassment in Capitol](#)

[Philadelphia Inquirer Pennsylvania to restrict special event grants after DNC bonus fiasco](#)

[Philadelphia Inquirer Op-ed from former PA Rep. Doug Reichley \(R\): In '67, drafters of Pa. constitution looked at redistricting, appointing judges, and a smaller legislature](#)

and he said it's gotten around 3,000 responses from around the country so far. (His investigation, centered on identity theft allegations, will be limited to New York.)

*The Verge* and other outlets have [previously reported on](#) the spam comments, but the parties behind them remain unknown. Schneiderman suggested that the incident was particularly important "in an era when foreign governments, and those seeking an unfair advantage here at home, have tried to undermine our democratic institutions." Rosenworcel also referenced "nearly half a million" comments sent by Russian email addresses. But Schneiderman said that "unless we get the information from the FCC, it's anecdotal evidence."



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For now, Schneiderman called the FCC's entire comment process "deeply corrupted," and asked federal investigators to look into the incident alongside his own probe. His concern was echoed by Rosenworcel, who also brought up other issues with the process, like an

[alleged denial of service attack](#) that crashed the system, and 50,000 comments that were submitted but are apparently missing from the public record. "When you add all that up, what you have is a record that's hard to trust," she said. "It is incumbent on the FCC and all of my colleagues to stand back, figure out what's happening with this record before us, and get to the bottom of these stolen identities."

A group of senators, led by Maggie Hassan (D-NH), said the same thing [in a letter](#) sent to FCC chairman Ajit Pai. "We are requesting that you delay your planned vote on this item until you can conduct a thorough review of the state of the record and provide Congress with greater assurance of its accuracy and completeness," they wrote.

Schneiderman accused the FCC of "stonewalling" on the investigation, although he said that the FCC inspector general had recently offered to help. An FCC spokesperson [previously dismissed](#) the complaints as "nothing more than a transparent attempt by a partisan supporter of the Obama Administration's heavy-handed internet regulations to gain publicity for himself." The agency did not immediately reply to an email requesting comment. – *The Verge*

The Federal Communications Commission [is planning to jettison](#) its network neutrality rules, and many Americans are distraught. Such a move, the Electronic Frontier Foundation warned, "invites a future where only the largest internet, cable and telephone companies survive, while every start-up, small business and new innovator is crowded out — and the voices of nonprofits and ordinary individuals are suppressed."

Critics worry that getting rid of neutrality regulation will lead to a "two-tier" internet: Internet service providers will start charging fees to websites and apps, and slow down or block the sites that don't pay up. As a result, users will have unfettered access to only part of the internet, with the rest either inaccessible or slow. Those fears are vastly overblown.

It's true that in the past, some service providers have threatened to charge websites. In 2005, during a previous phase in the net neutrality debate, the [chief executive of SBC Communications said](#), "Now what they would like to do is use my pipes for free, but I ain't going to let them do that because we have spent this capital and we have to have a return on it."

Service providers have also blocked sites that competed with their own services. In 2004, the Madison River Telephone Company in North Carolina blocked Vonage to protect its own phone service from competition; it was fined by the F.C.C. for violating network neutrality rules. In 2012, AT&T let only some of its customers use the phone app FaceTime; after there were complaints to the F.C.C., it allowed all customers to use it.

These incidents are troubling for anyone who wants an open, neutral internet. But keep two things in mind. First, these are rare examples, for a reason: The public blowback was fierce, scaring other providers from following suit. Second, blocking competitors to protect your own services is anticompetitive conduct that might well be stopped by antitrust laws without any need for network neutrality regulations.

But even today, service providers can and do throttle peer-to-peer sites, as a necessary network management technique — something explicitly allowed by the rules. Some university networks also slow peer-to-peer traffic, so that other kinds of traffic are not slowed down. This has nothing to do with service providers slowing down websites that have not paid a fee.

So why am I not worried? I worked for a telecommunications company for 25 years, and whatever one may think about corporate control over the internet, I know that it simply is not in service providers' interests to throttle access to what consumers want to see. Neutral broadband access is a cash cow; why would they kill it? Even if they wanted to, service providers would have a hard time extorting money from huge companies like Google and Netflix, because each service provider needs Google and its billions of users a lot more than Google needs it. Service providers could try to go after smaller websites, but they don't have much money to pay.

And there's still competition: Some markets may have just one cable provider, but phone companies offer increasingly comparable internet access — so if the cable provider slowed down or blocked some sites, the phone company could soak up the affected customers simply by promising not to do so. Recently, net neutrality proponents have pointed to Portugal as an example of their nightmare scenario. A mobile carrier there offers various internet packages — one optimized for users who like video, others who like email and so on. What the carrier does not do is offer only those things, precisely because no consumer is likely to buy just video or just email (and in any case, Portugal is governed by the European Union's net-neutrality rules).

The internet did not start out as a neutral invention. Instead, neutrality was an organic outcome of a competitive market. In the early days of the commercial internet, AOL and @Home had "walled gardens" of content that users could get to more easily, but over time service providers stopped favoring sites and just gave customers fast, neutral internet connections. No government policy created that outcome.

The good news is that we will soon have a real-world experiment to show who is right and who is wrong. The United States will get rid of its rules, and the European Union and Canada will keep their stringent regulations. In two years, will the American internet be slower, less innovative and split into two tiers, leaving Canadians to enjoy their fast and neutral net? Or, as I suspect, will the two markets remain very similar — proving that this whole agonized debate has been a giant waste of time? Let's check back in 2019. — **New York Times**

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Dish Network Corp said on Tuesday Chief Executive Charlie Ergen has stepped down to devote more time to the company's emerging wireless business. Erik Carlson, president and chief operating officer, will succeed Ergen as chief executive, the company said. Carlson will continue to report to Ergen, Dish said. The company's shares were up 1 percent at \$52.16 in early trading on Tuesday. Ergen, who co-founded Dish, has spearheaded the company's recent expansion including the launch of Sling TV and the acquisition of wireless spectrum. Sling was launched in 2015 to counter the threat of consumers cutting their TV packages for online streaming services. The company faces intense competition in the traditional pay-TV market and has been buying up wireless airwaves, or spectrum, in recent years. — **Reuters**

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Discovery Communications is paying \$70 million to take a majority interest in OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network. OWN had been a joint venture between Ms. Winfrey and Discovery. The deal increases Discovery's ownership stake in the basic cable channel to nearly 75 percent. The channel launched in 2011. Ms. Winfrey will continue as CEO of the network and work exclusively for OWN in the basic cable space through 2025. — **Associated Press**

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Former Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell today announced his endorsement of Braddock Mayor John Fetterman for Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania, according to a press release. According to Mr. Rendell, Mr. Fetterman is “the type of Democrat our state and our party need right now.” “I am thrilled to endorse John Fetterman for Lieutenant Governor,” Mr. Rendell said. “He is a progressive who understands the plight of the working-class family and has dedicated his career to helping those less fortunate, from his involvement in Big Brothers/Big Sisters, to his work with AmeriCorps, to his commitment to revitalizing Braddock. A 12-year mayor of Braddock, Fetterman has sought to drive the local economy by providing policy solutions to create jobs, revitalize the downtown, reduce neighborhood blight, and increase the number of residents and businesses that call Braddock home. He has done all of this while remaining committed to the town’s core sense of community and used that as an impetus for positive change and growth.

“In addition to his commitment to Western Pennsylvania, Fetterman has spent time in areas across the state, giving him important knowledge of the makeup of Pennsylvania and the kinds of support Pennsylvanians are looking for. Now more than ever, we need someone who understands the entire state and not just certain corners of it, and Fetterman is that very person. Fetterman is an idealist and a realist, with a proven record of turning his visions into reality. This is what Pennsylvania needs, and this is why I am supporting him to be our Lieutenant Governor. ‘ – ***Pittsburgh Post-Gazette***

