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Oral arguments were presented Friday in the most prominent lawsuit challenging the federal government's repeal of broadband access rules known as net neutrality.

The Federal Communications Commission **approved the rules in 2015** to ensure internet users equal and open access to all websites and services. The commission, under new leadership, rolled the rules back in 2017. The plaintiffs in the suit, led by the internet company Mozilla and supported by 22 state attorneys general, say the commission lacked a sound legal reason for scrapping the regulations. The government was expected to argue that the rules were repealed because of the burden they imposed on broadband providers like Verizon and Comcast.

The case, before the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, could wind through the courts for years. If the commission loses, it might try to rewrite its order rolling back the rules to avoid further legal challenges. The case is just one front in the fight over net neutrality. Here are two other forums where the subject continues to be fiercely debated. Immediately after the commission voted to repeal the rules, state officials jumped into action. More than 30 states have introduced bills to add their own net neutrality protections. Nine, including California, New York, Rhode Island and Washington, have approved such regulations.

That means people in those states are theoretically protected against moves by companies like AT&T and Charter that block or slow some web traffic. California even bans promotions for free streaming apps, a practice that can stifle the businesses of other websites that do not have the resources to offer such promotions. But court battles have complicated the enforcement of the laws. California's attorney general said the state would not enforce its rules until the federal appeals court ruled on the challenge to the commission's 2017 repeal.

The **state laws are being challenged** in lawsuits filed by the Justice Department and USTelecom, the telecommunications industry's main trade group. In repealing the net neutrality rules, the commission included a provision barring states from creating their own regulations. The goal was to avoid a patchwork of rules across the country. Traditionally, states had authority over telecommunications within their borders, but companies and the federal government have argued that the internet's global nature makes it harder to regulate state by state.

Philadelphia Inquirer
Op-ed by former PA Cong. Charlie Dent (R-15th) : Pennsylvania needs paper ballots to secure our elections

Members of Congress are expected to introduce net neutrality laws this year that would create nationwide rules, overriding whatever states have adopted. Democrats are pushing the issue, and some Republicans have voiced support for minimal rules. Any legislation is unlikely to pass this year, with Republicans still controlling the Senate. But net neutrality will certainly continue to be a political talking point. It became a campaign issue in the 2018 midterms for Democrats, and the party sees it as a winning issue, particularly among young voters, heading toward the 2020 presidential election. – ***New York Times***

Just last year, I bought a 65-inch 4K TV. It has a gorgeous picture: deep blacks and dynamic, true-to-life colors. I can finally watch all that 4K ultrahigh definition (UHD) content newly on offer from Netflix, Prime Video and iTunes. It's a glorious thing, and it feels a lot like the early days of high definition: Everything is deliciously detailed, real, beautiful. While gloating to a friend about the refreshing resolution on my relatively new TV, regaling her with an enthusiastic account of watching "Planet Earth II" in envelope-pushing ultra-definition, a curious grin crossed her face. "But aren't 8K TVs available now?" she interrupted. "Aren't they a lot better? Shouldn't I just wait for that?" It was an excellent question, and I was crushed.

Things are accelerating at shocking rates when it comes to TV technology. HD had a strong run after it was widely adopted in the early 2000s, only losing steam when Netflix first streamed "House of Cards" in 4K in 2014. According to IHS Markit, the number of world-wide households with a 4K TV was 28 million in 2015—it's expected to hit 335 million next year. If you walk into a store to buy a TV ahead of Sunday's Super Bowl, you'll likely leave with a 4K TV. Best Buy, for instance, has 170 of them on its website, compared to just 70 HDTVs.

But the 8K revolution is on the horizon. If you're indeed contemplating a giant new set that can last another decade, you have to ask: Is 4K good enough, is 8K worth the splurge, or should I just put up with my current TV for another year and see how the landscape looks then. First, some basic TV-resolution math: HD measures 1920-by-1080 pixels, totaling 2,073,600 pixels. Meanwhile 4K television, or UHD, measures 3,840-by-2,160 pixels for a total of 8,294,400 pixels—four times the number of pixels in standard HDTV—hence the "4K" designation. Which means 8K is a super detailed resolution of 7680-by-4320 for a mind-bending total of 33,177,600 pixels.

Why should you care? Because more pixels means more detail. More detail means a more realistic image, both of the pebbled texture of a football in flight and the pores of a cable news pundit. The pixel density also helps determine the TV size at which your picture looks best. The larger the TV, the larger each pixel must stretch, and the less detail your eyes see. Think of it like a Georges Seurat painting: The closer you stand to it, the larger the dots appear, and the less crisp the image looks. But step back and the picture's details suddenly reveal themselves. So while a 4K TV with its 8 million pixels might look amazing at 65-inches, go any larger and you lose the striking detail.

As 4K reaches its apex, prices for compatible sets are tumbling—a 50-inch Toshiba 4K Smart TV can be had for just $299 on bestbuy.com. And 4K content is widely available on most major streaming services (though Netflix charges an extra $5 a month for the luxury). The latest PlayStation and Xbox consoles now offer games in 4K. Even cable and satellite providers—often the final holdouts—are now adding 4K

channels in limited supply. “I would say go ahead and buy the 4K TV,” said Steven Bodner, a supervising colorist at Light Iron in New York, which corrects and digitizes TV and film images ahead of release. Mr. Bodner loves his 4K LG OLED (organic light-emitting diode). “Seeing the difference on a consumer monitor in your home will be difficult—unless you’re using a huge screen.”

If you’re the kind of TV viewer who wants the best right now, it may not be a bad idea to pony up for 8K to assure you don’t get left behind in the near future. After all, electronics are expensive, and no one wants to be spending coin for a new television every few years. In addition, if you’re going big, 8K may make sense. Peter Weedfald, senior vice president of sales and marketing at Sharp Electronics, suggests that 80 inches is the sweet spot for 8K televisions. You’ll not only be able to take advantage of the detailed resolution, he explained, but you could actually turn your TV into four 4K tiled screens: one for football or the Puppy Bowl, one for the kids’ videogames, one for the news and one for—well, that’s your call. Weather?

Keep in mind that 8K content is still extremely rare. YouTube and Vimeo offer some, but the earliest we’ll see live 8K will be in 2020, when the Japanese government and Sony will broadcast the Tokyo Olympics in 8K. Other than that, you’ll be using your 8K TVs to watch 4K content through 2019. And these sets aren’t cheap: A just-released Samsung 65-inch 8K TV will run $5,000, its 85-inch sibling $15,000, prices that will eventually come down. The teams are already lining up for kickoff. Which side are you on.? – ***Wall Street Journal***

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