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America's sole 24/7 French-language entertainment channel, TV5MONDE USA, has closed a new carriage agreement with Atlantic Broadband that will see the launch of the channel in Miami.

Based on the number of television service customers served, Atlantic Broadband is at present the ninth largest cable operator in the US. Its approximately 246,000 television service customers are located in five operating regions: Western Pennsylvania, Miami Beach, Maryland/Delaware, Aiken, S.C., and Eastern Connecticut.

Commenting on the deal, Elizabeth Michelsen, Atlantic Broadband's vice-president and general manager, said: "The launch of TV5MONDE USA and its French-themed programming adds another high-quality foreign language channel to our Miami system line-up that further expands the needs of our multicultural footprint."

Added TV5MONDE general manager Yves Bigot: "We look forward to beginning our new partnership with [Atlantic Broadband](#) that will allow [TV5MONDE USA](#) to offer their subscribers who are part of Miami Beach's vibrant international community a wonderful and varied line-up of French-language entertainment across a broad variety of programming genres." – *Rapid TV News*

Gladys Brown has been up in a bucket truck. She's ridden in a self-driving car. She's visited a gas well pad. "There are many times when we're going through cases and I'm thinking, well, I think we need to have a road trip," the chairman of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission said.

Launching This Month

Denver Post In merger-friendly GOP administration, Dish's Ergen gets chance to play kingmaker

Allentown Morning Call Wolf's approval rating up, new poll finds

Philadelphia Daily News Democratic Party devoid of purpose or principle

Delaware County Daily Times Editorial: Smack for Stack; lieutenant governor deserved rebuke

The regulatory agency she chairs deals with a wide array of entities that provide crucial and complicated services: power companies, railroads, taxi cabs, natural gas pipelines, internet providers, drinking water systems.



Amid an avalanche of paper filings, sometimes it helps to see the subject first hand.

Ms. Brown, who lives in Harrisburg and got her bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Pittsburgh, came to utilities because of a coincidence. A committee she was assigned to as a lawyer for Senate Democrats in 1991 dealt with professional licensure — something she knew well from a prior job — and consumer affairs — something she did not. "I said, 'I don't know anything about utility law.'" The response: "Don't worry. They don't usually do that much legislation."

Beginning two years later, the state Legislature undertook a series of major bills to deregulate public

utilities — first telephone service in 1993, then electricity in 1996, then natural gas in 1999. Ms. Brown remained assigned to the committee until 2013, when then-Gov. Tom Corbett appointed her to the PUC. Gov. Tom Wolf named her chairman in 2015. "Sometimes things pick you," she said. "I think that was the case with me with utility law."

The PUC deals with known hazards, like aging natural gas distribution lines, and anticipates threats, like a cyber intrusion that could cause a massive grid outage. The commission also touches the daily lives of thousands of people, with decisions that influence how much utilities can increase electric and gas bills, and how many digits you have to dial to make a local phone call.

Ms. Brown said that when she faces difficult decisions she returns to the commission's mission to balance the needs of consumers and utilities. "It's very important to me that people understand our process and understand that they do have a voice," she said. — *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

Here we go again. The Federal Communications Commission, now led by an anti-regulation ideologue appointed by President Trump, wants to gut the net neutrality rules that keep powerful broadband companies from calling the shots on the internet, at the expense of consumers.

Under the cynical guise of "restoring internet freedom," the new F.C.C. chairman, Ajit Pai, wants to give big telecom companies carte blanche to treat the content of their subsidiaries and partners more favorably than information from other companies — a practice that AT&T, Comcast and Verizon are already starting to employ. They would also be able to demand fees from companies like Netflix and YouTube to deliver videos and other content to customers.

If the commission, which has a 2-to-1 Republican majority, approves Mr. Pai's proposal, there will be little stopping the broadband industry from squelching competition, limiting consumer choice and

raising prices. The previous F.C.C. chairman, Tom Wheeler, helped put the rules Mr. Pai is attacking in place in 2015, and the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit upheld them last year.

Mr. Pai argues that existing regulations are hurting the internet. He said that the 12 largest internet service providers reduced investment by 5.6 percent between 2014 and 2016 because the net neutrality rules were too onerous. But he is cherry-picking data to make his case. Free Press, a public-interest group that supports net neutrality, found that total investment by publicly traded broadband companies **increased 5.3 percent** between 2013-14 and 2015-16.

Large telecommunications companies have been raking in profits in recent years. And they have been making multibillion-dollar acquisitions — not something you see from an industry that is withering from senseless regulations. Charter spent more than \$65 billion last year to buy Time Warner Cable and Bright House Networks. AT&T bought DirecTV for \$48.5 billion in 2015 and is trying to buy Time Warner, the media company, for \$85 billion.

Not only is Mr. Pai's lament for the broadband industry based on alternative facts, it misses the bigger point. Net neutrality is meant to benefit the internet and the economy broadly, not just the broadband industry. That means the commission ought to consider the impact the regulations have on consumers and businesses. In particular, the commission has a responsibility to protect people with few or no choices; most Americans have access to just one or two companies for residential service and just four big operators for wireless.

Mr. Pai argues that if the Wheeler rules are revoked, some safeguards will remain. For example, he says, broadband companies would refrain from blocking or slowing the content of competitors. He has not said how he would ensure that. But the F.C.C. is considering using voluntary commitments from the industry. Under that approach, officials at the Federal Trade Commission would have the power to fine or sue companies that make pledges and then fail to uphold them. But it is hard to believe that voluntary standards would be strong enough. It also puts the onus on individuals and small businesses to complain to regulators and request investigations.

Under Mr. Pai's proposal, broadband companies would probably use their gatekeeping position to give themselves a leg up. AT&T, for example, already encourages people to buy the streaming video service of its DirecTV subsidiary by allowing customers to watch it on AT&T's wireless network **without incurring data charges**. **Verizon** and **Comcast** have similar practices. Over time, such corporate policies will make it harder for smaller companies to compete with the telecom giants.

Big internet businesses like Amazon, Facebook, Google and Netflix will probably be fine under Mr. Pai's plans, because they are well established and have the money to cut special deals with broadband companies. Smaller firms and start-ups — some of which may never get started — will not be as lucky. Ultimately, though, the real losers will be all Americans, because there will be fewer choices and less innovation. — **New York Times**

Why would anyone want to impose a set of Depression-era regulations on the internet?

That's the question that members of the anti-net neutrality set seem always to ask. As though it bolsters their argument or something. They act as if simply posing the question should end all discussion. It's a forward-thinking concept, one that looks to see that those who are dreaming of the next big thing in some garage somewhere are not forever relegated to obscurity. Except that it doesn't. At all.

Just because a framework isn't exactly new doesn't make it obsolete. The same folk who scoff over Depression-era regulations being applied in 2017 are more than likely to revere our nation's Constitution. That document - think of it as a framework for our entire government - was written in 1787. Imagine how they'd react if someone were to wave away one of their concerns over the constitutionality of one thing or another by arguing that it makes little sense to apply 18th-century rules to 21st-century problems.

Just because something is old doesn't mean it can no longer apply. (And no, we're not comparing a set of Federal Communications Commission regulations to the U.S. Constitution; we are merely endeavoring to point out the obvious flaw at the center of a particularly specious argument.) FCC Chairman Ajit Pai has begun the process of rolling back net neutrality regulations. He started the rollback engine in an address on Wednesday(, April 26). It won't happen quickly, and perhaps not quietly, but it's what he wants to see happen. And it shouldn't.

At its heart, the concept of so-called net neutrality is quite simple: All traffic on the internet gets equal treatment. No one gets to pay to jump to the front of the line, slowing others, or making them stand

still, while those who've paid to play speed happily down the information superhighway. Your email or your Facebook post is no less important than a big company's video feed.

This is not some radical concept, foisted on an unsuspecting public by a band of big government activists. It's how the internet has been working since its creation. And the net neutrality regulations are nothing more than an effort to keep things working for everyone, not only for those who can afford to pay for better treatment.

Unsure of this? Just take a look at who is on which side. Those opposed to the net neutrality rules are mostly the giant internet service providers - AT&T; and Comcast and the like. And those in favor? Google and Facebook and Netflix and countless startups you've not yet heard of, but could one day. Though you'll be less likely to find out about them if net neutrality is abandoned and the cash-poor startups effectively become second-class citizens on the internet.

Seeking to keep the internet as the vital, dynamic entity it's become isn't a Depression-era notion. It's a forward-thinking concept, one that looks to see that those who are dreaming of the next big thing in some garage somewhere are not forever relegated to obscurity. The internet began neutral, favoring no one. It's the quintessential democratic notion, as American as freedom of expression. It should remain that way. – *Springfield (MA) Republican editorial*; **[yet another pro-NN editorial in the San Jose Mercury-News](#)**

Officials are urging Pennsylvania voters who want an absentee ballot for the primary election not to wait until the last minute. Secretary of State Pedro Cortes is reminding people that the application deadline is May 9 to be able to vote in the May 16 primary. Completed ballots have to be received by county elections offices by Friday, May 12, and it's not enough to have it postmarked by that date.

State election rules limit absentee ballots to people deployed with the military, state residents attending out-of-state colleges or universities, people who are injured or disabled, and people who will be out of town on election day. Details about the ballots and how to submit them are available on the Department of State's voting website. You can also download an application here:

[http://www.votespa.com/en-us/Documents/Absentee Ballot Application.pdf](http://www.votespa.com/en-us/Documents/Absentee_Ballot_Application.pdf) – *Allentown Morning Call*

