



# **American Bridge**

## **Trump Policy Report: “Technology Week”**

**6.20.17**

## “TECHNOLOGY WEEK”

The White House declared the week of June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017, “Technology Week.” Trump’s son-in-law and adviser Jared Kushner kicked things off at an event with technology company executives, where he said the goal of the week was to “improve the day-to-day lives of average citizens.”

To date, the Trump administration has done little in the way of improving the day-to-day lives of average citizens through technology policy.

- ✓ Trump signed a bill reversing an Obama-era rule against internet providers collecting and selling their customers’ browsing history, app usage history, location history, Social Security numbers, and other personal data.
- ✓ Trump signed a bill ostensibly to protect the U.S. from cybersecurity risks, but the order offered little in the way of new or substantive policy.
- ✓ Trump’s FCC announced it would seek a rollback of Obama-era net neutrality rules that would allow internet service providers to offer varying levels of service to different customers based on the rates they pay.

## The Trump Administration Named The Week Of June 19<sup>th</sup> “Technology Week”

### **TRUMP ADVISER AND SON-IN-LAW JARED KUSHNER KICKED OFF “TECHNOLOGY WEEK,” WHICH HE CALLED AN EFFORT TO “IMPROVE THE DAY-TO-DAY LIVES OF AVERAGE CITIZENS”**

**June 19<sup>th</sup>: White House Adviser And Trump’s Son-In-Law Jared Kushner Kicked Off The Administration’s “Technology Week.”** According to CBS News, “In rare public remarks, President Trump’s son-in-law and top adviser, Jared Kushner, welcomed top technology company executives for a brainstorming session at the White House on Monday. Kushner kicked off the White House ‘Technology Week’ as part of the administration’s ongoing efforts to make progress on campaign promises. The event was hosted by the White House Office of American Innovation and the American Technology Council, which is led by Kushner.” [CBS News, [6/19/17](#)]

#### **Kushner: “The Goal Is Simple Here, To Improve The Day-To-Day Lives Of Average Citizens.”**

According to CBS News, “Monday’s event was billed as a brainstorming session to help modernize the federal government’s technology infrastructure and, according to Kushner, help bring ‘business sensibility’ to the government. ‘Many warned me bureaucracy would resist any change we tried to implement. So far I’ve found exactly the opposite,’ said Kushner. He added, ‘The goal is simple here, to improve the day-to-day lives of average citizens. That’s a core promise and we are keeping it.’” [CBS News, [6/19/17](#)]

## To Date, Trump Administration Policies Have Prioritized Big Business Over The American People

### **TRUMP REVERSED AN OBAMA-ERA RULE PROHIBITING INTERNET PROVIDERS FROM COLLECTING AND SELLING CUSTOMERS’ BROWSING, APP, LOCATION, AND OTHER DATA**

**Washington Post: Trump Signed A Bill Repealing An Obama-Era Rule Against Internet Providers “Collecting, Storing, Sharing And Selling Certain Types Of Consumer Information Without User Consent.”** According to The Washington Post, “President Trump signed congressional legislation Monday night that repeals the Federal Communications Commission's privacy protections for Internet users, rolling back a landmark policy from the Obama era and enabling Internet providers to compete with Google and Facebook in the online ad market. The Obama-backed rules — which would have taken effect later this year — would have banned Internet providers from collecting, storing, sharing and selling certain types of customer information without user consent.” [Washington Post, [4/4/17](#)]

**Washington Post: The Rule “Had Sought To Limit What Companies Could Do With Information Such As Customer Browsing Habits, App Usage History, Location Data And Social Security Numbers,” And Strengthen Protections Against Hackers.** According to The Washington Post, “In a party-line vote, House Republicans freed Internet service providers such as Verizon, AT&T and Comcast of protections approved just last year that had sought to limit what companies could do with information such as customer browsing habits, app usage history, location data and Social Security numbers. The rules also had required providers to strengthen safeguards for customer data against hackers and thieves.” [Washington Post, [3/28/17](#)]

**The Rule Required Internet Providers To Receive Explicit Permission From Customers To Share Their Personal Usage Information.** According to PCWorld, “The U.S. Senate has voted to kill broadband provider privacy regulations prohibiting them from selling customers' web-browsing histories and other data without their permission. The Senate's 50-48 vote Thursday on a resolution of disapproval would roll back Federal Communications Commission rules requiring broadband providers to receive opt-in customer permission to share sensitive personal information, including web-browsing history, geolocation, and financial details with third parties. The FCC approved the regulations just five months ago.” [PCWorld, [3/23/17](#)]

### **Internet Providers Will Use The Data To Target Ads To Specific Users And Make Billions In The Process**

**Washington Post: Without The Rule, Internet Providers Could Use Customers’ “Personal And Financial Information To Sell Highly Targeted Ads — Making Them Rivals To Google And Facebook In The \$83 Billion Online Advertising Market.”** According to The Washington Post, “Congress sent proposed legislation to President Trump on Tuesday that wipes away landmark online privacy protections, the first salvo in what is likely to become a significant reworking of the rules governing Internet access in an era of Republican dominance. [...] If Trump signs the legislation as expected, providers will be able to monitor their customers’ behavior online and, without their permission, use their personal and financial information to sell highly targeted ads — making them rivals to Google and Facebook in the \$83 billion online advertising market.” [Washington Post, [3/28/17](#)]

### **Supporters Of The Bill Included Internet Companies, Their Lobbyists, Republican Politicians... And Almost Nobody Else**

**The Hill HEADLINE: “AT&T, Comcast Defend Repeal Of Internet Privacy Rules”** [The Hill, [3/31/17](#)]

**AT&T Public Policy Blog HEADLINE: “Reversing Obama’s FCC Regulations: A Path To Consumer Friendly Privacy Protections”** [AT&T Public Policy Blog, [3/31/17](#)]

**New York Times HEADLINE: “Cable Industry Mobilizes Lobbying Army To Block F.C.C. Moves”** [New York Times, [6/12/16](#)]

**Telecom Companies Stepped Up Their Lobbying Efforts When The FCC Proposed The Privacy Rules In 2016.** According to The New York Times, “The behind-the-scenes activity by cable companies and their industry groups is part of the biggest lobbying push by the \$115 billion industry in Washington since 2009, when the government drew up its net neutrality rules. These days, the cable and telecom industries are hiring more lobbyists, issuing warnings that they may sue federal agencies, and making speeches and writing scathing blog posts about policy makers. The trigger? A string of proposed regulations by the F.C.C. that has left cable companies feeling besieged. So far this year, the agency has proposed reforming rules on set-top boxes so that people can pick any television device to receive cable and online video, which could cut into the industry’s \$19.5 billion in annual set-top-box rental fees. The F.C.C. also unveiled broadband privacy rules that would make it harder to collect and share data on users for targeted advertising. And the agency also announced a plan to force cable and telecom companies to lease bandwidth to competitors in certain areas, with potential limits on how much they can charge, curbing revenue for such deals.” [New York Times, [6/12/16](#)]

**President Of The NCTA, Michael K. Powell, Called The Privacy And Other FCC Rules “Policy Blows” And “Thundering, Tectonic Shifts.”** According to The New York Times, “The trigger? A string of proposed regulations by the F.C.C. that has left cable companies feeling besieged. So far this year, the agency has proposed reforming rules on set-top boxes so that people can pick any television device to receive cable and online video, which could cut into the industry’s \$19.5 billion in annual set-top-box rental fees. The F.C.C. also unveiled broadband privacy rules that would make it harder to collect and share data on users for targeted advertising. And the agency also announced a plan to force cable and telecom companies to lease bandwidth to competitors in certain areas, with potential limits on how much they can charge, curbing revenue for such deals. ‘The policy blows we are weathering are not modest regulatory corrections,’ Michael K. Powell, president of the N.C.T.A., said in a speech last month. ‘They have been thundering, tectonic shifts.’” [New York Times, [6/12/16](#)]

**Jonathan Spalter, CEO Of Lobbying Group USTelecom, Issued A Statement In Support Of The House’s Vote to Repeal The Rule.** According to The New York Times, “Congress completed its overturning of the nation’s strongest internet privacy protections for individuals on Tuesday in a victory for telecommunications companies, which can track and sell a customer’s online information with greater ease. [...] Broadband companies immediately celebrated the House vote. They promised they would honor their voluntary privacy policies, noting that violations would be subject to lawsuits. ‘Today’s vote removing another set of unnecessary regulations is a win-win for consumers and their privacy,’ said Jonathan Spalter, the chief executive of the broadband lobbying group USTelecom. ‘Online users will continue to have the consistent and strong privacy protections they require and the promise of continued innovation they expect from the internet.’” [New York Times, [3/28/17](#)]

### **The Bill Passed The House And Senate With Only Republican Support**

**S.J.Res.34 Passed The House Of Representatives 215-205, With All 215 “Yeas” From Republican Members.** [Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives, S.J.Res.34, Vote 202, [3/28/17](#)]

**S.J.Res.34 Passed The Senate 50-48, With All 50 “Yea” From Republican Senators.** [U.S. Senate, S.J.Res.34, Vote 94, [3/23/17](#)]

*Rep. Marsha Blackburn, Who Introduced A Bill In The House To Reverse The Rule, Was One Of The Largest Recipients Of Telecom Industry Donations During The 2016 Cycle*

**Among House Republicans Who Voted For The Bill, Marsha Blackburn Received The 7<sup>th</sup>-Greatest Amount Of Campaign Cash From The Telecom Industry During The 2016 Election Cycle.** [The Verge, [3/29/17](#)]

**Blackburn Introduced A Bill In The House To Reverse The Rule.** According to Fox News Nashville, “Tuesday evening, the House passed H.J. 86, a resolution introduced by Rep. Blackburn and 16 other legislators. It was the proposal’s final hurdle after passing in the Senate a week earlier. The bill nullified a December 2016 rule issued by the FCC which was set to go into effect. The ‘Protecting the Privacy of Customers of Broadband and Other Telecommunications Services’ rule would have forced internet service providers and other telecommunication services to request from customers the sharing of confidential information. According to the rule, it would have also required consent when ‘a broadband provider offers customers financial incentives in exchange for the provider’s right to use a customer’s confidential information.’ Among the information considered ‘sensitive’ would have been financial information, health information, Social Security numbers, precise location, browsing history, app usage, voice services, and information pertaining to children.” [Fox 17 Nashville, [3/30/17](#)]

*Blackburn Has Received Nearly \$546,000 From The Telecom Industry Over The Course Of Her Career*

**Blackburn Has Received Nearly \$546,000 From The Telecom Industry Over The Course Of Her Career.** According to Fox 17 Nashville, “In the wake of the resolution's passing, questions surrounding the impact of contributions from the telecom industry received by Rep. Blackburn have been raised. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, a self-proclaimed nonpartisan, independent research group which tracks money in politics, Rep. Blackburn has received close to \$546,000 from the telecom industry over the course of her career.” [Fox 17 Nashville, [3/30/17](#)]

*Republicans Who Voted For The Bill Received Considerably More Campaign Cash From The Telecom Industry Than The 15 Republicans Who Voted Against It*

**OpenSecrets Found Republicans Who Voted For The Bill Received An Average Of \$138,000 From The Telecom Industry Over The Course Of Their Careers, Compared To \$77,000 Among Republicans Who Voted Against It.** According to the OpenSecrets Blog, “We took a look at the contributions received by members of the House and Senate from the telecom industry, Here’s what we found: On the House side, while there wasn’t a huge difference in overall funds received by lawmakers voting for or against the resolution, there was a gap in the Republican vote. GOP lawmakers who voted to quash the rule received an average of \$138,000 from the industry over the course of their careers. The 15 Republicans voting nay? They got just \$77,000.” [OpenSecrets Blog, [3/29/17](#)]

**Polling Showed Americans Overwhelmingly Opposed To Internet Providers Selling Their Browsing History And Other Personal Data**

**A HuffPost/YouGov Poll Found 83% Of Respondents Opposed To The Concept Of Telecom Companies Being Allowed To Share Customers’ Personal Data Without Their Permission.** According to a HuffPost/YouGov poll, when asked, “Do you think telecom and cable companies should or should not be allowed to share personal information about customers, such as their web browsing history, without first getting customers’ permission?,” 83% of respondents said “They should not be allowed.” [HuffPost/YouGov poll, [3/31/17](#)]

**A HuffPost/YouGov Poll Found 71% Of Respondents Supported The Obama-Era Privacy Rules.** According to a HuffPost/YouGov poll, when asked, “Last year, the federal government adopted a set of rules to ban telecom and cable companies from sharing customers’ personal information, including their web browsing history, without their permission. A Republican bill passed by Congress would overturn those rules before they go into effect. Which describes your opinion?,” 71% of respondents said “The ban on sharing customers’ information should go into effect.” [HuffPost/YouGov poll, [3/31/17](#)]

**A HuffPost/YouGov Poll Found 74% Of Respondents Wanted Trump To Veto The Bill.** According to a HuffPost/YouGov poll, when asked, “If President Trump vetoes the bill, telecom and cable companies will be banned from sharing customers’ personal information without permission. If President Trump signs the bill, telecom and cable companies will be allowed to share customers’ information without permission. What do you think President Trump should do?,” 74% of respondents said “Veto the bill.” [HuffPost/YouGov poll, [3/31/17](#)]

*Trump Signed The Deeply Unpopular Legislation Without His Usual Pomp*

**Washington Post: “Trump Signed The Legislation With Little Fanfare Monday Evening, A Contrast To Other Major Executive Actions He Has Taken From The Oval Office.”** According to The Washington Post, “Trump signed the legislation with little fanfare Monday evening, a contrast to other major executive actions he has taken from the Oval Office. The move prohibits the FCC from passing similar privacy regulations in the future. And it paves the way for Internet providers to compete in the \$83 billion market for digital advertising.” [Washington Post, [4/4/17](#)]

### **Critics Called Out The Bill As A Blatant Payoff To Internet Companies At The Expense Of Everyday Americans’ Privacy**

**Craig Aron, CEO Of Advocacy Group Free Press: “There Is Literally No Public Support For This Bill. Its Only Advocates Are The Nation’s Biggest Phone, Cable And Internet Companies.”**

According to The Hill, “It’s shocking that of all the challenges facing this country the Trump administration would prioritize taking away people’s privacy,” said Craig Aron, CEO of the advocacy group Free Press. “There is literally no public support for this bill. Its only advocates are the nation’s biggest phone, cable and Internet companies. There’s no longer any question — if there ever was — whose needs this administration intends to serve. But people everywhere are on high alert to the serious threat to the free and open Internet. And they will fight back.” [The Hill, [4/3/17](#)]

**Neema Singh Giuliana Of The ACLU: “It Is Extremely Disappointing That The Senate Voted Today To Sacrifice The Privacy Rights Of Americans In The Interest Of Protecting The Profits Of Major Internet Companies.”** According to The Washington Post, “It is extremely disappointing that the Senate voted today to sacrifice the privacy rights of Americans in the interest of protecting the profits of major Internet companies, including Comcast, AT&T, and Verizon,” Neema Singh Giuliani, legislative counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union, said in a statement.” [Washington Post, [3/23/17](#)]

**Former FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler: Reversing The Rule “Is A Dream For Cable And Telephone Companies [...] The Problem Is They Are Selling Something That Doesn’t Belong To Them.”**

According to an opinion by Tom Wheeler in The New York Times, “On Tuesday afternoon, while most people were focused on the latest news from the House Intelligence Committee, the House quietly voted to undo rules that keep internet service providers — the companies like Comcast, Verizon and Charter that you pay for online access — from selling your personal information. The Senate already approved the bill, on a party-line vote, last week, which means that in the coming days President Trump will be able to sign legislation that will strike a significant blow against online privacy protection. [...] Reversing those protections is a dream for cable and telephone companies, which want to capitalize on the value of such personal information. I understand that network executives want to produce the highest return for shareholders by selling consumers’ information. The problem is they are selling something that doesn’t belong to them.” [Tom Wheeler, Opinion – New York Times, [3/29/17](#)]

**Center For Digital Democracy Executive Director Jeff Chester Said That The FCC’s Regulation On Sensitive Customer Web Data Was “The Only Privacy Protections Americans Can Have When They Use The Internet Or Their Mobile Phones.”** According to PCWorld, “The U.S. Senate has voted to kill broadband provider privacy regulations prohibiting them from selling customers’ web-browsing histories and

other data without their permission. [...] Privacy advocates blasted the Senate's vote, and many net neutrality advocates see the vote as an early step toward dismantling net neutrality. The vote kills 'the only privacy protections Americans can have when they use the internet or their mobile phones,' said Jeff Chester, executive director of the Center for Digital Democracy." [PCWorld, [3/23/17](#)]

- **Chester: If Congress Passed A Resolution Repealing The FCC Regulation, Americans Would Become "Victims Of Massive Ongoing Surveillance From Their ISPs."** According to PCWorld, "The U.S. Senate has voted to kill broadband provider privacy regulations prohibiting them from selling customers' web-browsing histories and other data without their permission. [...] The vote kills 'the only privacy protections Americans can have when they use the internet or their mobile phones,' said Jeff Chester, executive director of the Center for Digital Democracy. If Congress passes the resolution, 'Americans will become victims of massive ongoing surveillance from their ISPs,' he added." [PCWorld, [3/23/17](#)]
- **Chester: Repealing The Regulation Meant That Americans Would "Never Be Safe Online From Having Their Most Personal Details Stealthily Scrutinized And Sold To The Highest Bidder."** According to The Washington Post, "In a party-line vote, House Republicans freed Internet service providers such as Verizon, AT&T and Comcast of protections approved just last year that had sought to limit what companies could do with information such as customer browsing habits, app usage history, location data and Social Security numbers. [...] Advocates for tough privacy protections online called Tuesday's vote 'a tremendous setback for America.' 'Today's vote means that Americans will never be safe online from having their most personal details stealthily scrutinized and sold to the highest bidder,' said Jeffrey Chester, executive director of the Center for Digital Democracy." [Washington Post, [3/28/17](#)]

**Stephen Colbert On "The Late Show:" "I Guarantee You There Is Not One Person, Not One Voter Of Any Political Stripe Anywhere In America Who Asked For This."** According to The Hill, "I guarantee you there is not one person, not one voter of any political stripe anywhere in America who asked for this,' Stephen Colbert said on 'The Late Show' last week. 'No one in America stood up in a town hall and said, 'Sir, I demand you let somebody else make money off my shameful desires. Maybe blackmail me someday.'" [The Hill, [4/3/17](#)]

- **Colbert: "No One In America Stood Up In A Town Hall And Said, 'Sir, I Demand You Let Somebody Else Make Money Off My Shameful Desires.'" According to The Hill, "I guarantee you there is not one person, not one voter of any political stripe anywhere in America who asked for this,' Stephen Colbert said on 'The Late Show' last week. 'No one in America stood up in a town hall and said, 'Sir, I demand you let somebody else make money off my shameful desires. Maybe blackmail me someday.'" [The Hill, [4/3/17](#)]**

## **Reversal Of The Rule Could Incentivize Internet Providers To Charge Customers For Their Privacy**

**Reversal Of The Rule Could Lead To Internet Providers Charging Customers Who Don't Want Their Browsing History Monitored.** According to The Washington Post, "In a party-line vote, House Republicans freed Internet service providers such as Verizon, AT&T and Comcast of protections approved just last year that had sought to limit what companies could do with information such as customer browsing habits, app usage history, location data and Social Security numbers. [...] Industry backers say that allowing providers to use data-driven targeting could benefit consumers by leading to more relevant advertisements and innovative business models. AT&T, for instance, used to offer Internet discounts to consumers in exchange for letting the company monitor their browsing history. With Tuesday's vote, such programs could see a return, and be marketed as a way to access cheaper Internet — although consumer groups have

criticized these plans as a way for providers to charge customers a premium for their privacy.” [Washington Post, [3/28/17](#)]

**AT&T Previously Offered Internet Discounts To Consumers Who Let The Company Monitor Their Web Browsing History.** According to The Washington Post, “Industry backers say that allowing providers to use data-driven targeting could benefit consumers by leading to more relevant advertisements and innovative business models. AT&T, for instance, used to offer Internet discounts to consumers in exchange for letting the company monitor their browsing history.” [Washington Post, [3/28/17](#)]

### **Many Don’t Have The Option Of Switching Internet Providers If They Find Issue With Their Provider’s Privacy Practices**

**Many Americans Only Have Access To One Or Two Internet Providers In Their Area.** According to The Washington Post, “And although consumers can easily abandon sites whose privacy practices they don’t agree with, it is far more difficult to choose a different Internet provider, the activists said. Many Americans have a choice of only one or two broadband companies in their area, according to federal statistics.” [Washington Post, [3/28/17](#)]

## **TRUMP SIGNED AN EXECUTIVE ORDER TO PROTECT THE U.S. FROM CYBERSECURITY RISKS, BUT THE ORDER OFFERED LITTLE IN THE WAY OF NEW OR SUBSTANTIVE POLICY**

**Trump Signed An Executive Order To Protect The U.S. From Cybersecurity Risks.** According to The Atlantic, “President Donald Trump signed an executive order on Thursday that aims to protect the U.S. from cybersecurity risks, including computer hacking.” [The Atlantic, [5/11/17](#)]

- **Reuters: Trump’s Cybersecurity Executive Order Aimed To “Bolster The Government’s Cyber Security And Protect Critical Infrastructure From Cyber Attacks.”** According to Reuters, “U.S. President Donald Trump signed an executive order on Thursday to bolster the government’s cyber security and protect critical infrastructure from cyber attacks, marking his first significant action to address what he has called a top priority.” [Reuters, [5/11/17](#)]
- **The Order Focused On Protecting Federal Networks, Updating Outdated Systems, And Directing Department And Agency Heads To Work Together.** According to USA Today, “The executive order outlines three key priorities for the Trump administration’s efforts in cyberspace: Protecting federal networks, updating antiquated and outdated systems, and directing all department and agency heads to work together ‘so that we view our federal I.T. as one enterprise network,’ Bossert said.” [USA Today, [5/11/16](#)]

**The Atlantic: “Cyber Experts Say The Executive Order Is A Natural Progression From The Policies Of The Obama And Bush Administrations.”** According to The Atlantic, “Cyber experts say the executive order is a natural progression from the policies of the Obama and Bush administrations, with White House Homeland Security Adviser Tom Bossert telling reporters that the document sought to improve upon efforts made under Obama. While cybersecurity specialists criticized previous drafts for lacking input from federal agencies and policy experts, reviews of the latest executive order were largely positive. Speaking to Reuters, Michael Daniel, an Obama-era White House cybersecurity coordinator, expressed his approval, but highlighted the need for further action, calling the executive order ‘a plan for a plan.’” [The Atlantic, [5/11/17](#)]

**Obama White House Cybersecurity Coordinator Michael Daniel: Trump’s Order Is “A Plan For A Plan.”** According to The Atlantic, “Speaking to Reuters, Michael Daniel, an Obama-era White House



cybersecurity coordinator, expressed his approval, but highlighted the need for further action, calling the executive order ‘a plan for a plan.’” [The Atlantic, [5/11/17](#)]

### **Trump Had Given Himself A 90-Day Deadline To Establish A New Cybersecurity Council, Which He Missed**

**Headline: “Trump Blows His Deadline On Anti-Hacking Plan”** [Politico, [4/20/17](#)]

**Politico: Trump Said He Would Have A Cybersecurity Team In Place Within 90 Days Of Taking Office, But By Day 90 There Was “No Team,” “No Plan,” And “No Clear Answer From The White House On Who Would Even Be Working On What.”** According to Politico, “President-elect Donald Trump was very clear: ‘I will appoint a team to give me a plan within 90 days of taking office,’ he said in January, after getting a U.S. intelligence assessment of Russian interference in last year’s elections and promising to address cybersecurity. Thursday, Trump hits his 90-day mark. There is no team, there is no plan, and there is no clear answer from the White House on who would even be working on what.” [Politico, [4/20/17](#)]

### **Trump’s Order Notably Excluded Reference To Russia’s Unprecedented Cyber Interference In The 2016 Election**

**Trump’s Order Came Just Months After The U.S. Intelligence Community Concluded Russia Conducted Cyber Attacks Against Democratic Organizations, Interfering In The 2016 Election.**

According to USA Today, “The highly anticipated executive order comes months after a hack-filled election season. The U.S. intelligence community accused Russia of orchestrating a campaign of cyberattacks against Democratic political organizations and leaking them to websites such as WikiLeaks to undermine Hillary Clinton's campaign and public confidence in the democratic process. Trump signed the order in the midst of FBI and congressional investigations into both the Russian cyberattacks and the possibility Trump's campaign associates colluded with the Russians.” [USA Today, [5/11/16](#)]

**The Atlantic: Trump’s Order Notably Did Not Mention Russia’s Election Interference “Despite It Being One Of The Most Concerning Breaches Of National Cybersecurity In U.S. Election History.”**

According to The Atlantic, “Curiously, the executive order makes no mention of Russia’s election interference, despite it being one of the most concerning breaches of national cybersecurity in U.S. election history. While Trump has acknowledged the existence of Russian hacking, he has long maintained that it played no role in the 2016 U.S. election. Even after his meeting with intel officials in January, Trump seemed convinced that information regarding Russia’s role in the election was nothing more than a ‘political witch hunt.’” [The Atlantic, [5/11/17](#)]

**The Trump Administration Downplayed Russia’s Role In Influencing The Order.** According to USA Today, “But the election hacks were only one inspiration for the new order, Bossert said. ‘The Russians are not our only adversary on the internet,’ he said. ‘The Russians, the Chinese, the Iranians, other nation-states are motivated to use cyber capacity and cyber tools to attack our people and our government and their data.’” [USA Today, [5/11/16](#)]

### **On The Campaign Trail, Trump Encouraged Cyber Breaches That Would Help Him Politically**

**Trump Encouraged Russia To Hack Hillary Clinton.** According to The New York Times, “Donald J. Trump said on Wednesday that he hoped Russian intelligence services had successfully hacked Hillary Clinton’s email, and encouraged them to publish whatever they may have stolen, essentially urging a foreign adversary to conduct cyberespionage against a former secretary of state.” [New York Times, [7/28/16](#)]

- **Donald Trump: “Russia, If You’re Listening, I Hope You’re Able To Find The 30,000 Emails That Are Missing... I Think You Will Probably Be Rewarded Mightily By Our Press.”** According to The New York Times, “‘Russia, if you’re listening, I hope you’re able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing,’ Mr. Trump said during a news conference here in an apparent reference to Mrs. Clinton’s deleted emails. ‘I think you will probably be rewarded mightily by our press.’” [New York Times, [7/28/16](#)]

**Trump Praised WikiLeaks For Publishing Hillary Clinton’s Hacked Emails.** According to The Hill, “GOP presidential nominee Donald Trump on Monday praised WikiLeaks for publishing Democratic rival Hillary Clinton’s hacked emails. ‘I love WikiLeaks,’ he told listeners during a campaign rally in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., prompting prolonged ‘Lock her up!’ chants from his audience. ‘It’s amazing how nothing is secret today when you talk about the Internet.’” [The Hill, [10/10/16](#)]

- **Trump: “I Love WikiLeaks.”** According to The Hill, “GOP presidential nominee Donald Trump on Monday praised WikiLeaks for publishing Democratic rival Hillary Clinton’s hacked emails. ‘I love WikiLeaks,’ he told listeners during a campaign rally in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., prompting prolonged ‘Lock her up!’ chants from his audience. ‘It’s amazing how nothing is secret today when you talk about the Internet.’” [The Hill, [10/10/16](#)]

**Trump Read From Wikileaks Emails At Campaign Speeches.** According to The Hill, “Trump then began reading from sheets of paper some of the details revealed by WikiLeaks’s Friday dump of Clinton’s emails. ‘In a speech behind closed doors, ‘Crooked Hillary’ said, ‘Terrorism is not a big threat to our nation,’” Trump said. “Terrorism is a big, big threat. We are riding into something very dangerous. ‘In another closed door speech, she wanted to have open borders and open trade with everybody. There go the rest of your jobs.’” [The Hill, [10/10/16](#)]

- **Trump: “Hillary Clinton, As Wikileaks Proves, Is A Corrupt Globalist.”** According to Politifact, “‘Hillary Clinton, as WikiLeaks proves, is a corrupt globalist,’ he said at a rally on Oct 21.” [Politifact, [4/21/17](#)]

## **THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCED IT WOULD SEEK TO ELIMINATE NET NEUTRALITY RULES, GIVING POWER TO INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS OVER CONSUMERS**

**The FCC Published A Final Proposal To Repeal The Agency’s 2015 Network Neutrality Rules.**

According to The Verge, “Last week, the Federal Communications Commission voted to start a proceeding to repeal the 2015 network neutrality rules and the legal authority underlying it, Title II of the Communications Act of 1934. The rules ensure that internet users can access the online content and services of their choosing without interference from ISPs like Comcast, AT&T, Verizon, and Charter. Yesterday the FCC made its final proposal to repeal the rules public. This document, known as a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, or NPRM, is nearly identical to the draft Chairman Ajit Pai made public on April 27th.” [The Verge, [5/24/17](#)]

- **The Proposal Would “Re-Evaluate” Existing Net Neutrality Rules, Including Enforcement Mechanisms And The Associated Legal Authorities.** According to The Verge, “Last week, the Federal Communications Commission voted to start a proceeding to repeal the 2015 network neutrality rules and the legal authority underlying it, Title II of the Communications Act of 1934. The rules ensure that internet users can access the online content and services of their choosing without interference from ISPs like Comcast, AT&T, Verizon, and Charter. Yesterday the FCC made its final proposal to repeal the rules public. This document, known as a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, or

NPRM, is nearly identical to the draft Chairman Ajit Pai made public on April 27th. [...] The second half purports to ‘re-evaluate’ the existing net neutrality rules, the mechanisms that enforce them and any legal authority (other than Title II) that could be used to support them.” [The Verge, [5/24/17](#)]

## **The Plan Would Reverse The Obama-Era Classification Of Broadband As A Common Carrier Service Subject To Strong Government Oversight**

**FCC Chairperson Ajit Pai Said He Would Undo An Obama-Era Net Neutrality Classification Of Broadband As A Common Carrier Service.** According to The New York Times, “His plan, though still vague on the details, is a sharp change from the approach taken by the last F.C.C. administration, which approved rules governing a concept known as net neutrality in 2015. [...] The policy was the signature telecom regulation of the Obama era. It classified broadband as a common carrier service akin to phones, which are subject to strong government oversight. [...] In his speech on Wednesday, Mr. Pai said he would undo that classification.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

- **The Obama Administration Classified Broadband As A Common Carrier Service Subject To Strong Federal Oversight, Similar To Phones.** According to The New York Times, “The policy was the signature telecom regulation of the Obama era. It classified broadband as a common carrier service akin to phones, which are subject to strong government oversight.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]
- **The Classification Made It Harder For Broadband Providers To Collect And Sell User Data.** According to The New York Times, “The policy was the signature telecom regulation of the Obama era. It classified broadband as a common carrier service akin to phones, which are subject to strong government oversight. President Obama made an unusual public push for the reclassification in a video message that was widely shared and appeared to embolden the last F.C.C. chairman, Tom Wheeler, to make the change. The classification also led to the creation of broadband privacy rules in 2016 that made it harder to collect and sell browsing information and other user data.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

**The FCC Republican Majority Argued That Broadband Internet Access Should Be Classified As “Information Services” Under The Communications Act, Which Would Lead To Weaker Oversight.** According to The Verge, “The FCC majority makes three arguments in support of its proposal to reverse the 2015 classification decision. First, it argues that the plain language, structure, and history of the Communications Act makes clear that broadband internet access services are ‘information services,’ which would subject them to weaker oversight by the FCC.” [The Verge, [5/24/17](#)]

**FCC Chairman Ajit Pai Said That High-Speed Internet Service Should Not Be Treated As A Public Utility.** According to The New York Times, “The chairman, Ajit Pai, said high-speed internet service should no longer be treated like a public utility with strict rules, as it is now. The move would, in effect, largely leave the industry to police itself.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

## **The FCC Voted Along Party Lines To Approve The Proposal**

**The FCC Voted Along Party Lines To Approve A Proposal To Roll Back The Agency’s Net Neutrality Rules.** According to CNET, “The Federal Communications Commission on Tuesday published the text of its proposal to roll back the agency's net neutrality rules, allowing the public to comment on the new plan. The agency's commissioners voted along party lines in support of the proposal (PDF), which aims to fulfill FCC Chairman FCC Ajit Pai's promise to eliminate the utility-style regulatory framework the FCC adopted in 2015.” [CNET, [5/23/17](#)]

## *The Approval Initiated A Three-Month Public Comment Period On The Proposal*

**After Voting To Approve A Proposal To Eliminate Net Neutrality Rules, The FCC Opened A Three-Month Public Comment Period On The Matter.** According to CNET, “The Federal Communications Commission on Tuesday published the text of its proposal to roll back the agency's net neutrality rules, allowing the public to comment on the new plan. The agency's commissioners voted along party lines in support of the proposal (PDF), which aims to fulfill FCC Chairman FCC Ajit Pai's promise to eliminate the utility-style regulatory framework the FCC adopted in 2015. [...] The 75-page proposal, titled ‘Restoring Internet Freedom,’ invites the public to weigh in on the proposal for a period of about three months.” [CNET, [5/23/17](#)]

## **Net Neutrality Prevents Broadband Providers From Providing Varying Levels Of Internet Coverage To Different Companies And Customers**

**Net Neutrality Rules, Approved During The Obama Administration, Prohibited Broadband Providers From Blocking Content.** According to The New York Times, “His plan, though still vague on the details, is a sharp change from the approach taken by the last F.C.C. administration, which approved rules governing a concept known as net neutrality in 2015. The rules were intended to ensure an open internet, meaning that no content could be blocked by broadband providers and that the internet would not be divided into pay-to-play fast lanes for internet and media companies that can afford it and slow lanes for everyone else.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

**Net Neutrality Rules Ensured That The Internet Could Not Be Divided Into “Pay-To-Play Fast Lanes” For Customers That Could Afford It, And Slow Lanes For The Rest.** According to The New York Times, “His plan, though still vague on the details, is a sharp change from the approach taken by the last F.C.C. administration, which approved rules governing a concept known as net neutrality in 2015. The rules were intended to ensure an open internet, meaning that no content could be blocked by broadband providers and that the internet would not be divided into pay-to-play fast lanes for internet and media companies that can afford it and slow lanes for everyone else.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

**Pai's Proposal Would Undo Efforts To Ensure That All Online Content Was Treated The Same By Broadband Service Providers.** According to The New York Times, “The chairman of the Federal Communications Commission on Wednesday outlined a sweeping plan to loosen the government's oversight of high-speed internet providers, a rebuke of a landmark policy approved two years ago to ensure that all online content is treated the same by the companies that deliver broadband service to Americans.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

**The Existing FCC Rules Were Intended To Prevent Broadband Providers Like AT&T And Comcast From Giving Special Treatment To Certain Content.** According to The New York Times, “The plan is Mr. Pai's most forceful action in his race to roll back rules that govern telecommunications, cable and broadcasting companies, which he says are harmful to business. But he is certain to face a contentious battle with the consumers and tech companies that rallied around the existing rules, which are meant to prevent broadband providers like AT&T and Comcast from giving special treatment to any streaming videos, news sites and other content.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

## *Before Implementing Net Neutrality, The FCC Received Millions Of Public Comments Against “Fast Lanes”*

**In 2014, The FCC Received Approximately 3.7 Million Comments Urging Regulators To Outlaw “Fast Lanes.”** According to Recode, “After years of false starts, the question of internet regulation landed in the lap of Pai's Democratic predecessor, former Chairman Tom Wheeler, in 2014. As the agency sought to craft its rules, roughly 3.7 million comments flooded the FCC, urging regulators to outlaw online ‘fast lanes’ in which companies could pay for speedier delivery of their web content.” [Recode, [4/26/17](#)]

*The Plan Would “Largely Leave The Industry To Police Itself”*

**New York Times: “The Move Would, In Effect, Largely Leave The Industry To Police Itself.”**

According to The New York Times, “The chairman of the Federal Communications Commission on Wednesday outlined a sweeping plan to loosen the government’s oversight of high-speed internet providers, a rebuke of a landmark policy approved two years ago to ensure that all online content is treated the same by the companies that deliver broadband service to Americans. The chairman, Ajit Pai, said high-speed internet service should no longer be treated like a public utility with strict rules, as it is now. The move would, in effect, largely leave the industry to police itself.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

**Telecom Interests Lobbied For The Change**

**Cable And Telecom Lobbyists Pushed Pai’s FCC To Unwind Rules On Broadband Providers.**

According to The New York Times, “Telecom and cable companies applauded the announcement on Wednesday. Since Mr. Pai’s appointment in January by President Trump, their lobbyists have flooded the agency and the offices of Congress, pushing for an unwinding of rules that they say hamper their businesses. The No. 1 target has been the rules on broadband providers, which they complain have cramped their willingness to invest in their networks.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

*AT&T CEO Randall Stephenson Compared Net Neutrality To Laws Governing Rotary-Dial Telephones*

**AT&T CEO Randall Stephenson Praised Pai For Attempting To Remove What He Called A “Stifling Regulatory Cloud Over The Internet.”** According to The New York Times, “Telecom and cable companies applauded the announcement on Wednesday. Since Mr. Pai’s appointment in January by President Trump, their lobbyists have flooded the agency and the offices of Congress, pushing for an unwinding of rules that they say hamper their businesses. [...] ‘We applaud F.C.C. Chairman Pai’s initiative to remove this stifling regulatory cloud over the internet,’ Randall L. Stephenson, AT&T’s chief executive, said in a statement.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

- **Stephenson: “It Was Illogical For The F.C.C. In 2015 To Abandon That Light-Touch Approach And Instead Regulate The Internet Under An 80-Year-Old Law Designed To Set Rates For The Rotary-Dial-Telephone Era.”** According to The New York Times, “‘We applaud F.C.C. Chairman Pai’s initiative to remove this stifling regulatory cloud over the internet,’ Randall L. Stephenson, AT&T’s chief executive, said in a statement. ‘It was illogical for the F.C.C. in 2015 to abandon that light-touch approach and instead regulate the internet under an 80-year-old law designed to set rates for the rotary-dial-telephone era.’” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

**Stephenson Said That The First Few Months Of The Trump Administration Had Been “Amazing” For The Telecom Industry.**

According to Recode, “For years, internet providers and wireless giants have sought to escape federal regulation, and now that Washington is under Republican stewardship, they’ve been successful at escaping such scrutiny — even lobbying to kill federal limits on the way they collect and sell consumers’ personal information. ‘It’s obviously been an amazing few months in our industry, and there’s clearly a return to a lighter-touch, pro-growth regulatory philosophy,’ said Randall Stephenson, the chief executive of AT&T, on an earnings call yesterday.” [Recode, [4/26/17](#)]

- **Stephenson Praised The “Return To A Lighter-Touch, Pro-Growth Regulatory Philosophy.”** According to Recode, “‘It’s obviously been an amazing few months in our industry, and there’s clearly a return to a lighter-touch, pro-growth regulatory philosophy,’ said Randall Stephenson, the chief executive of AT&T, on an earnings call yesterday. While he said the wireless giant is

‘committed’ to protecting the open internet, Stephenson still called the existing FCC rules ‘illogical.’” [Recode, [4/26/17](#)]

*The FCC’s Republican Majority Backed Up Claims That Net Neutrality Hurt Consumers With Studies Funded By Internet Service Providers*

**The FCC Republican Majority Cited Studies Funded By Internet Service Providers To Argue That Net Neutrality Laws “Resulted In Negative Consequences For American Consumers.”** According to The Verge, “The FCC majority makes three arguments in support of its proposal to reverse the 2015 classification decision: [...] Third, citing nothing more than ISP-funded studies, it argues that Title II classification has ‘resulted in negative consequences for American consumers — including depressed broadband investment and reduced innovation because of increased regulatory burdens and regulatory uncertainty...’” [The Verge, [5/24/17](#)]

### **Industry Experts Opposed The Plan, Including 800 Tech Startups And Investors**

**According To Internet Association CEO Michael Beckerman, Rolling Back Net Neutrality Would “Result In A Worse Internet For Consumers And Less Innovation Online.”** According to The New York Times, “So far, Google and Netflix, the most vocal proponents of net neutrality in previous years, have not spoken individually about Mr. Pai’s proposal. Speaking through their trade group, the Internet Association, they said the broadband and net neutrality rules should stay intact. ‘Rolling back these rules or reducing the legal sustainability of the order will result in a worse internet for consumers and less innovation online,’ Michael Beckerman, chief executive of the Internet Association, said in a statement.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

**Recode Called Pai’s Plan A “Win For Telecom Giants, But A Major Problem For Consumer Advocates.”** According to Recode, “FCC Chairman Ajit Pai has kicked off his campaign to kill the agency’s net neutrality rules[.] Pai aims to replace the rules — a win for telecom giants, but a major problem for consumer advocates.” [Recode, [4/26/17](#)]

**According To Free Press President Craig Aaron, Repealing Net Neutrality Rules Would “Put Consumers At The Mercy Of Phone And Cable Companies.”** According to The New York Times, “Mr. Pai said he was generally supportive of the idea behind net neutrality but said the rules went too far and were not necessary for an open internet. [...] Mr. Pai voted against the current rules as a commissioner. Critics of his ideas for changing the rules warned that making any commitments only voluntary would pave the way for the creation of business practices that harm competition. ‘It would put consumers at the mercy of phone and cable companies,’ said Craig Aaron, president of the consumer advocacy group Free Press.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

**Internet Companies Like Facebook Supported Strong Broadband Rules.** According to The New York Times, “Last week, Mr. Pai went to Silicon Valley to meet with executives of tech companies like Facebook, Oracle, Cisco and Intel to solicit their support for revisions to the broadband rules. The Silicon Valley companies are divided on their views about the existing policy, with internet companies like Facebook supporting strong rules and hardware and chip makers open to Mr. Pai’s changes.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]

**Approximately 800 Tech Start-Up Companies And Investors Wrote A Letter To Pai Against Reversing Net Neutrality, Arguing That Internet Providers Would Be Allowed To “Pick Winners And Losers In The Market” Without The Rules.** According to The New York Times, “About 800 tech start-ups and investors, organized by the Silicon Valley incubator Y Combinator and the San Francisco policy advocacy group Engine, protested the unwinding of net neutrality in a letter sent to Mr. Pai on Wednesday.

‘Without net neutrality, the incumbents who provide access to the internet would be able to pick winners or losers in the market,’ they wrote in the letter.” [New York Times, [4/26/17](#)]