

Net Neutrality Governor Media Release 1-22-18

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Governor Bullock Protects Net Neutrality in Montana

Bullock first governor in the nation to implement action to safeguard internet freedom

MONTANA - Governor Steve Bullock today signed an executive order to protect net neutrality in Montana by requiring that successful recipients of state contracts adhere to internet neutrality principles.

Standing alongside a group of computer science students at the same high school he attended growing up, Governor Bullock said, "for as long as you, or I, or anyone in this room has used the internet, we've had certain expectations about how things work. We've had access to a free and open internet. But a free and open internet is no longer guaranteed. The loss of internet neutrality principles threatens the future of the students standing in this very room."

"There has been a lot of talk around the country about how to respond to the recent decision by Federal Communications Commission to repeal net neutrality rules, which keep the internet free and open. It's time to actually do something about it," said Governor Bullock. "This is a simple step states can take to preserve and protect net neutrality. We can't wait for folks in Washington DC to come to their senses and reinstate these rules."

[cid:image004.jpg@01D39371.6E42B790]

Photo Credit: Governor Steve Bullock

As the first governor in the country to implement action in the wake of the FCC's decision to repeal net neutrality rules, Governor Bullock invited other governors and statehouses to join him. Governor Bullock's administration will offer the framework to other states who wish to follow.

"To every governor and every legislator in every statehouse across the country, and to every small business and every Fortune 500 company that wants a free and open internet when they buy services: I will personally email this to you," Bullock continued.

The executive order notably sets the terms on which the State of Montana will be making purchases and makes a preference for a free and open internet clear. The State of Montana is a significant purchaser of internet services.

"When the FCC repealed its net neutrality rules, it said consumers should choose. The State of Montana is one of the biggest consumers of internet services in our state. Today we're making our choice clear: we want net neutrality," Bullock said. "It's good government, and our citizens who use online services rely on it."

The order states that "the free and open exchange of information, secured by a free and open internet, has never been more essential to modern social, commercial and civic life," and that "Montana citizens rely on a free and open internet to meet the world."

The order directs that to receive a contract from the State of Montana for providing telecommunications services, the service provider must not block lawful content, throttle, impair or degrade lawful internet traffic on the basis of internet content, engage in paid prioritization, or unreasonably interfere or disadvantage the users' ability to select, access, and use broadband internet access service.

The executive order is attached.

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Montana Governor Steve Bullock