

March 29, 2018

Mayor Bill de Blasio
Office of the Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

I am pleased to write to you today as one of the 111 mayors and other local elected officials who, over the course of the past eight months, have written the FCC and/or Congressional leadership as part of a collective effort to defend net neutrality. As you well know, net neutrality mandates that all lawful internet content is equally accessible, regardless of its subject matter or viewpoint. Unfortunately, following the FCC's December 2017 abandonment of net neutrality, internet service providers (ISPs) will soon be empowered to speed, slow, or even block internet content based upon their own political views and businesses interests or those of their high-paying clients.

While the struggle to save net neutrality continues at the federal and state level, I wanted to alert you to an option that enables localities to ensure all their residents can access an internet that adheres to net neutrality and free speech principles and more robustly protects user privacy. That option is to have municipal and county governments themselves, rather than private ISP companies, provide their populations with internet service. Not surprisingly, this "community broadband" option is already being pursued by hundreds of cities, towns, and counties around the country, and in many cases, these localities have been able to provide faster and cheaper service than for-profit telecoms.

Today, the ACLU published a report that provides a detailed examination of the benefits of community broadband systems and how they can advance the protection of net neutrality, user privacy, and equitable broadband access. A copy of the report, titled "The Public Internet Option," is enclosed with this letter.



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We hope you find the report to be a valuable resource should you choose to explore such an option. If you have any questions regarding the report, please let me know, and I will be happy to assist you.

Thank you for standing up for net neutrality. We look forward to continuing to work with you to provide a free and fair internet for all Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Faiz Shakir", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Faiz Shakir
ACLU National Political Director



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Enclosure