



State of Vermont
Office of the Secretary of State
128 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-1101

[phone] 802-828-2363
[fax] 802-828-2496
www.sec.state.vt.us

James C. Condos, Secretary of State
Christopher D. Winters, Deputy Secretary

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Contact: Eric Covey, 802-828-2148

Vermont Secretary of State Jim Condos Issues Statement Decrying Decision by the Federal Communications Commission Overturning Net Neutrality Rules

Montpelier, VT – Following yesterday’s decision by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) gutting the 2015 Open Internet Order, which prohibits content restrictions, website fees and the creation of internet ‘fast’ and ‘slow’ lanes by internet providers, Vermont Secretary of State Jim Condos released a statement condemning the decision, calling it a devastating blow to open information access and free speech.

“Open and unfettered access to information is critical to a functioning democracy” said Vermont Secretary of State Jim Condos. “The FCC’s decision to upend net neutrality is a major blow to our democratic ideals of open information access and free speech, allowing corporations to restrict what information Americans are able to access, and how they’re able to access it. This is a clear affront to personal freedom and the ability of all Americans to access the informational, educational and social resources of the internet without interference.”

The Secretary of State’s office provides open access to government information through the Secretary’s website, including information on campaign finance filings, historic election results, and professional license holders, amongst other information and resources. “The internet is a key transparency tool that the public has a right to access in an unencumbered and unrestricted manner” said Secretary Condos.

The FCC’s repeal of net neutrality rules is expected to be challenged in court. Vermont Senators Leahy and Sanders have joined Senator Markey (Mass.) and a number of other Senators in a plan to introduce a Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution that would overturn yesterday’s decision by the FCC. Additionally Representative Welch said in an official statement yesterday that he will soon join colleagues on the House Energy and Commerce Committee to introduce legislation to reverse this decision.

“I thank, and stand with, Vermont’s Congressional Delegation taking direct steps to protect Vermonters’ right to open information access from the interests of big broadband companies” reiterated Secretary Condos. “Allowing big broadband companies to pick and choose what information they want to put a premium on for the sake of profits is a disgrace to our democratic values.”

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