

2014 -- H 8361

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N

**SUPPORTING AN OPEN INTERNET PROTECTED BY THE PRINCIPLE OF NET
NEUTRALITY**

Introduced By: Representatives Handy, Tanzi, Canario, Cimini, and Ajello

Date Introduced: June 19, 2014

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, Broadband Internet Access is an essential part of daily life today for all the
2 people of Rhode Island, with broadband networks becoming more and more often our basic and
3 only communications platform; and

4 WHEREAS, Access to an open Internet is important for each and every one of our
5 constituents, as the Internet becomes a driver of our economy, our educational system, our
6 healthcare services, our government institutions, and our democratic discourse; and

7 WHEREAS, Access to an open Internet gives individuals, associations, investors and
8 entrepreneurs the power to run small businesses, contribute to the marketplace of ideas, partake in
9 civic engagement, and exercise their freedom of speech; and

10 WHEREAS, The Open Internet developed and thrived under the principle that broadband
11 providers cannot block, discriminate against, or interfere with the lawful content, applications,
12 and services that these broadband networks carry, and that broadband customers may choose to
13 access over their connections; and

14 WHEREAS, This principle, commonly referred to as Net Neutrality, protects innovation
15 and creativity by preventing broadband providers from unreasonably favoring or prioritizing their
16 own voice, video, messaging or other communications services over offerings from entities
17 unaffiliated with such broadband providers; and

18 WHEREAS, This principle preserves the longstanding ideal of ensuring that
19 communications networks are open to all speakers on similar terms, while ensuring that

1 broadband providers will continue to invest in abundant capacity rather than creating incentives
2 for under-investment, scarcity and prioritization of traffic on purposefully congested networks;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Without the continuation of this Net Neutrality principle, the public will not
5 benefit from competition, job creation and technological innovation, as our entire economy
6 becomes more vulnerable to the profit motives of large broadband providers that could charge
7 new fees for access to broadband customers; and

8 WHEREAS, Violations of Net Neutrality create uncertainty and the potential for
9 broadband providers to extort fees from websites, and thereby threaten Rhode Island businesses
10 that rely on the Internet, and particularly our burgeoning community of technology start-ups; and

11 WHEREAS, The Federal Communications Commission's authority to safeguard Net
12 Neutrality, and to ensure that our nation's broadband networks remain competitive, open, and
13 nondiscriminatory in their carriage of our information, has come into question as a result of a
14 federal appellate court decision issued in January 2014; now, therefore be it

15 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and
16 Providence Plantations hereby supports an Open Internet protected by the principle of Net
17 Neutrality; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives hereby supports the Federal
19 Communications Commission's adoption of Open Internet rules that will categorically protect our
20 state's residents and businesses from blocking, discrimination, and undue interference by
21 broadband providers with the information they carry for their customers; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives hereby supports the Federal
23 Communications Commission's use of that agency's jurisdiction over all interstate
24 telecommunications services as the basis of its authority to adopt and enforce these protections
25 for the free flow of information over our nation's essential broadband communications
26 infrastructure; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives hereby urges Rhode Island's United
28 States Senators and Representatives to support, and make known their support, for strong Net
29 Neutrality regulations that mandate that broadband providers not block, discriminate against, or
30 interfere with the lawful content, applications, and services that these broadband networks carry,
31 and that broadband customers may choose to access over their connections; and be it further

32 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
33 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Rhode Island's Congressional Delegation, and

1 the Chief Information Officer of the State of Rhode Island Division of Information Technology.

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