

18 February 2018

To the members of the House Committee on State Affairs,

My name is Jode Sparks and I have lived I am a lifelong resident of Sterling on the Kenai Peninsula. I am writing to strongly urge you to support House Joint Resolution 31.

The FCC's repeal of net neutrality regulations, a move opposed by over 4/5 of Americans¹, presented a crisis for the future of the Internet. Net neutrality is an issue that is particularly important for young people and Alaska's rural areas. As an 18-year-old who grew up on the edge of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, I remember the days of dial-up. It would take minutes to simply load webpages, hours to download files, and streaming videos was practically unthinkable. Years later, I can't imagine my life without an open Internet. I use the Web to learn, laugh, and, most importantly, be myself. My life, and the lives of so many others, would be so much less vibrant without the Internet. The fact that I emailed this testimony and gathered information from online outlets demonstrates how vital a resource the Internet has become. Rural Alaska, and much of the western US, already faces challenges providing fair Internet access². The FCC's ruling sided with corporations instead of your constituents by removing regulations that protected Alaskans, rural and otherwise, from unfair ISP practices.

The FCC's short-sighted rule-change could have devastating effects. I urge you to support the passage of HJR 31 because fair Internet access is vital to the lives of Alaskans.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jode Sparks
Alaska Youth for Environmental Action Trainer
Student Body President
Soldotna High School

¹ <http://thehill.com/policy/technology/364528-poll-83-percent-of-voters-support-keeping-fccs-net-neutrality-rules>

² <http://www.hcn.org/articles/technology-western-states-lead-the-fight-to-maintain-net-neutrality>