

**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 31**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES KAWASAKI, Parish, Fansler, Spohnholz, Gara, Tuck, Drummond

Introduced: 1/26/18

Referred: State Affairs

**A RESOLUTION**

1   **Urging the United States Congress to overturn the Federal Communications**  
2   **Commission's order ending net neutrality.**

3   **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4       **WHEREAS**, on December 14, 2017, the Federal Communications Commission  
5       adopted, by a vote of three to two, an order to reverse the regulations that established the  
6       federal government's broadband policy of net neutrality and to preempt states from imposing  
7       net neutrality rules or regulations on Internet service providers; and

8       **WHEREAS** 5 U.S.C. 801 - 808 (Congressional Review Act) grants to the United  
9       States Congress the authority to overturn the Federal Communications Commission's order  
10       and reinstate net neutrality with a simple majority vote of each house, by enacting a joint  
11       resolution of disapproval introduced not later than 60 legislative days after the Federal  
12       Communications Commission submits the new rules to the United States Congress; and

13       **WHEREAS** net neutrality protects an individual's ability to access and transmit  
14       information on the Internet by requiring Internet service providers to treat all Internet websites

1   equally, regardless of content, source, or business relationship with the Internet service  
2   provider or others; and

3           **WHEREAS**, without net neutrality, Internet service providers can lawfully charge  
4   customers higher rates to access certain Internet websites, download music, and watch videos,  
5   and, under the Federal Communications Commission's new order, an Internet service provider  
6   may slow down or block access to Internet websites altogether including the Internet websites  
7   of its competitors; and

8           **WHEREAS** the reversal of net neutrality regulations harms small businesses, start up  
9   companies, and entrepreneurs who rely on a free and open Internet to conduct business,  
10   flourish, and grow; and

11           **WHEREAS**, with its action to reverse net neutrality regulations, the Federal  
12   Communications Commission has knowingly invited anti-consumer practices and set up an  
13   unfair pay-to-play system that may financially reward Internet service providers that  
14   discriminate; and

15           **WHEREAS** first amendment rights of free speech, free press, and free association are  
16   placed at grave risk without a net neutral environment that enables the open flow of citizens'  
17   thoughts, ideas, and concerns, and ensures that information relied on to form opinions is  
18   openly accessible; and

19           **WHEREAS** a University of Maryland School of Public Policy poll conducted in early  
20   December 2017 found that 83 percent of Americans, including 75 percent of Republicans and  
21   89 percent of Democrats, oppose the Federal Communications Commission's action to reverse  
22   net neutrality regulations; and

23           **WHEREAS** the Federal Communications Commission's public process surrounding  
24   its reversal of net neutrality was unacceptably flawed, in that, of the over 21,000,000  
25   comments received, up to 2,000,000 were linked to stolen identities; nearly 500,000 were  
26   likely generated from Russian electronic mail addresses; 94 percent were apparently  
27   submitted multiple times; 57 percent came from duplicate or temporary addresses; in nine  
28   separate occurrences, 75,000 identical or similar comments were posted in the same second;  
29   and the top seven comments made up 38 percent of the submissions; and

30           **WHEREAS** Alaska's climate and isolation from the contiguous 48 states require  
31   residents of the state to rely heavily on the Internet to connect with each other and to the rest

1 of the country and the world to keep in touch with family and for work and education  
2 purposes; and

3 **WHEREAS** Alaska's remote communities--many of which already struggle to obtain  
4 stable, affordable Internet access--appreciate and rely on the principles of net neutrality to  
5 maintain connectivity to Alaska's urban hubs and beyond; and

6 **WHEREAS**, in light of the nature of the challenges residents of the state face without  
7 a guarantee of net neutrality, Governor Bill Walker and Attorney General Jahna Lindemuth  
8 wrote to the Federal Communications Commission on December 13, 2017, requesting the  
9 agency to delay its vote on the proposal rolling back net neutrality regulations until the  
10 integrity of the public process had been adequately investigated; and

11 **WHEREAS** many technology companies, including Apple, Microsoft, Amazon,  
12 Netflix, and Facebook, oppose the Federal Communications Commission's net neutrality  
13 order because the companies recognize net neutrality is necessary to ensure a level Internet  
14 playing field for their customers; and

15 **WHEREAS** a diverse group of consumer, media, technology, library, arts, civil  
16 liberties, and civil rights organizations, including the American Library Association, the  
17 Association of College and Research Libraries, the Disability Rights Education and Defense  
18 Fund, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, the National Coalition Against Censorship, the  
19 National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of its low-income clients, and the National  
20 Organization for Women, oppose the Federal Communications Commission's reversal of net  
21 neutrality regulations;

22 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports a free and open  
23 Internet that is equally accessible to all consumers; and be it

24 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States  
25 Congress to exercise its authority under the Congressional Review Act to overturn the Federal  
26 Communications Commission's regulatory decision to end net neutrality protections.

27 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President  
28 of the United States; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S.  
29 Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska  
30 delegation in Congress; all other members of the 115th United States Congress; and the  
31 presiding officers of the legislatures of each of the other 49 states.