

# 21st Century Broadband Policies Needed to Spur American Innovation & Investment

The Internet plays a vital role in the social and economic fabric of our nation. It is a critical platform for ensuring freedom of expression and is a cornerstone of our 21st century global economy.

National broadband policy must keep American companies at the forefront of innovation, and enable companies across the Internet ecosystem to invest to maintain our global leadership. Any regulations on the broadband marketplace should be appropriately tailored to address real, not hypothetical harms and should include effective, but targeted, safeguards that ensure that the Internet remains open and vibrant.

This vibrant and dynamic broadband competition undercuts the need for overly burdensome utility regulation.

Today's broadband market is highly competitive with multiple wireless and wireline providers utilizing a variety of technology platforms and offers consumers a steady stream of innovation, expanded connectivity and increased value. This vibrant and dynamic Broadband competition undercuts the need for overly burdensome utility regulation.

Yet, recent FCC 'utility-style' Internet regulation under Title II of the Communications Act casts unnecessary doubt and delay on CERTAIN network operators that slows innovation, deters investment and creates marketplace uncertainty.

*Today, Internet Service Providers and other Information and Communications Technology companies make up 1/3 of the top 25 companies that invest the most in America's economy and infrastructure.<sup>1</sup>*

To continue America's leadership position in the Technology, Media and Telecom (TMT) arena, we need smart policies that accelerate, rather than inhibit the transformation of our nation's broadband infrastructure.

New Internet policies should be as nimble as the devices and networks on which we rely, and should encourage "permission-free" innovation. All actors in the Internet marketplace should be subject to the same set of rules and expectations on consumer protection issues, such as privacy, security and transparency.

AT&T supports balanced and focused Open Internet rules that protect consumers against blocking or degrading service and provide incentives for continued investment and innovation in even faster and more robust broadband networks.

Singling out broadband providers for unique and burdensome treatment, and relying on the regulatory tools of yesterday to address the technologies of tomorrow will not drive continued growth and innovation of the Internet.

## Continuing Light-Touch Regulation

America invented the Internet and enabled it to grow through a minimal, light-touch bipartisan regulatory approach.

Under this common sense policy framework the Internet helped create better jobs, enable more efficient markets, and unleash American ingenuity, productivity, and creativity.

Between 1995 and 2007, the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector contributed 25% of U.S. GDP growth, and during the past two decades accounted for nearly 60% of U.S. labor productivity.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.progressivepolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/InvestHeroes\\_2016.pdf](http://www.progressivepolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/InvestHeroes_2016.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.tiaonline.org/sites/default/files/pages/TIA%20U%20S%20%20ICT%20RD%20Policy%20Report.pdf>

