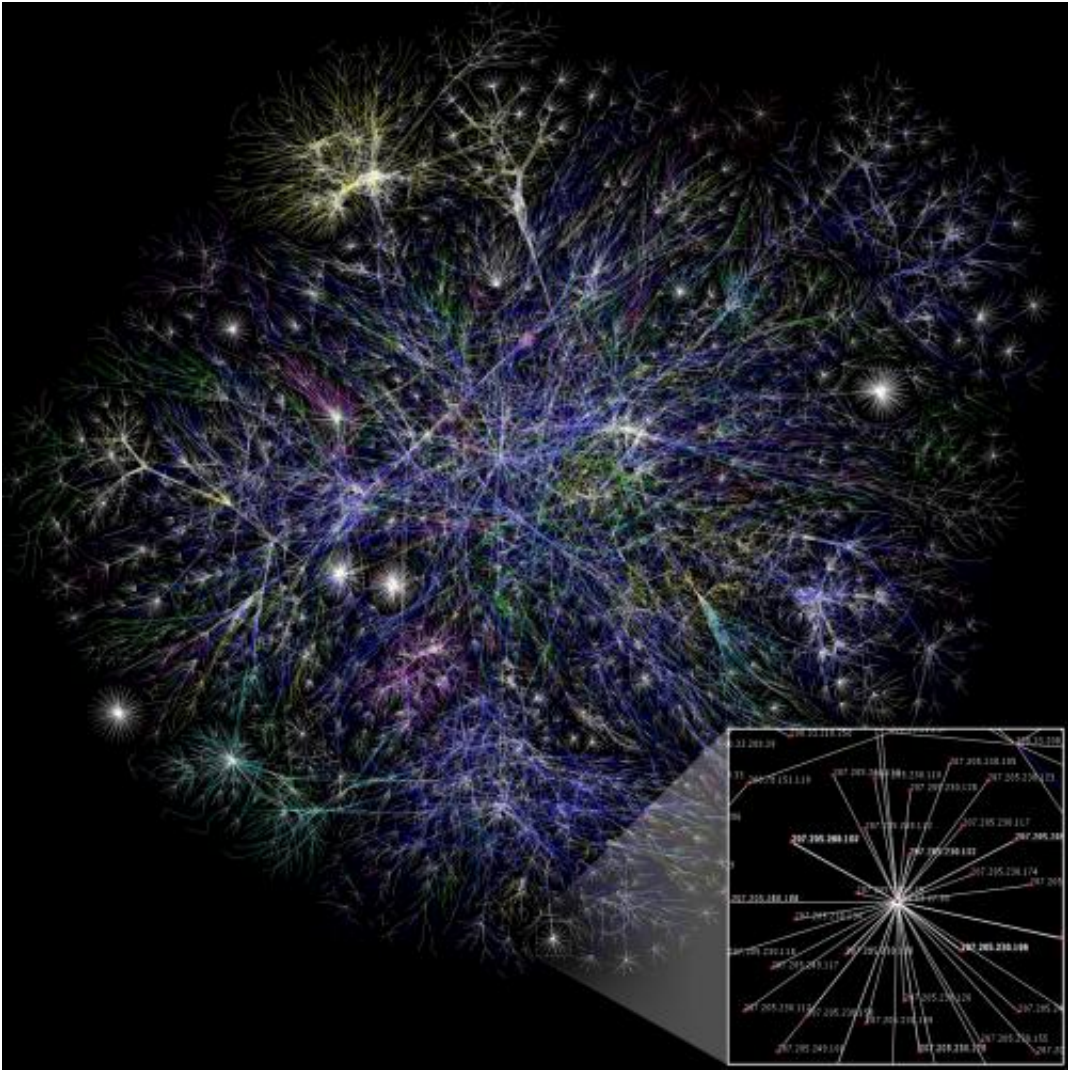


US reinstates open internet rules rescinded under Trump

April 25 2024



Partial map of the Internet based on the January 15, 2005 data found on opte.org. Each line is drawn between two nodes, representing two IP addresses. Credit: Wikimedia Commons

The US Federal Communications Commission voted on Thursday to reinstate tougher rules to guarantee open access to the internet, reversing a decision made during the Trump administration.

The battle over net neutrality has raged for over a decade in the FCC and the US courts, with both sides contending they represent "internet freedom."

The 2015 net neutrality rules were backed by then-president Barack Obama, but the election of Donald Trump reversed the FCC party majority and it quickly scrapped the changes.

"This agency, the nation's leading communications authority, believes every consumer deserves internet access that is fast, open and fair," said FCC chair Jessica Rosenworcel, a Democratic appointee, ahead of the vote.

The rules bring back government oversight for internet providers by classifying broadband as a utility-like service, regulated like water and phone companies.

The commission voted 3-2 along party lines to reinstate the open internet rules.

"These net neutrality policies ensure you can go where you want and do what you want online without your broadband provider making choices for you," Rosenworcel added.

"They make clear your broadband provider should not have the right to block websites, slow services, or censor online content," she said.

Backers of net neutrality argue the rules, which were challenged in court, prevented powerful internet providers like Comcast and AT&T from

shutting out rival services and creating "fast" and "slow" lanes for online services.

"Today marks the last day that internet service providers can continue to put profit over people," said Jenna Leventoff, senior policy counsel at the American Civil Liberties Union.

"We are thrilled that the FCC now has the authority it needs to protect consumers, promote the exercise of First Amendment rights online, and ensure that everyone has access to high-quality, affordable internet," Leventoff added.

But others worried that such rules were a heavy-handed effort to reclassify internet providers as utilities, which could discourage investment in the fast-evolving sector.

Under Trump, the FCC said the change in the approach to net neutrality taken by the FCC was part of a return to "a light-touch regulatory framework."

Big tech companies largely applauded the return to the Obama era rules, seeing them as a fair compromise and necessary to provide reliable access to the internet.

"These rules strike the right balance between ensuring robust, reliable broadband while fostering continued innovation in the services that carriers offer," said Stephanie Joyce, senior vice president at the Computer and Communications Industry Association.

© 2024 AFP

Citation: US reinstates open internet rules rescinded under Trump (2024, April 25) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2024-04-reinstates-internet-rescinded-trump.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.