

November 1, 2022

Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel  
Federal Communications Commission  
45 L Street NE  
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: *Empowering Broadband Consumers Through Transparency*, CG Docket No. 22-2**

Chairwoman Rosenworcel:

We, the undersigned, strongly support the creation of the broadband consumer label, as mandated by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and endorsed in a presidential executive order,<sup>1</sup> and we call upon the Commission to ensure the label is clear and easily accessible.

For too long, consumers have struggled with internet bills that are opaque and misleading. The typical internet plan is inscrutable to the average person, containing a maze of ancillary fees and confusing terms. Consumers cannot make informed decisions in this environment. Just last week, Carnegie Mellon University published a study finding consumers want better disclosures and overwhelmingly support the broadband label.<sup>2</sup>

However, the label will not be successful if consumers cannot find it. Many ISPs are adept at hiding billing terms amid fine print and poor website design. The label must not fall victim to these practices. Accordingly, the Commission should require the clear and prominent display of the label on the customer's monthly bill. This is where consumers most frequently interact with their ISP and need the information provided in the label to identify surprise fees and other inaccuracies.

The Commission should reject proposals to limit the label's display to the point-of-sale. As President Biden noted in a speech last week, the label is intended to help consumers avoid "junk fees."<sup>3</sup> The label cannot fulfill this purpose if it is only displayed once, when a subscriber signs up for service, never to be seen again. To identify and deter junk fees, consumers need to see the label *after* the point of sale, on their monthly bill, where junk fees often first appear.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*, Pub. L. No. 117-58, 135 Stat. 429, 1244, § 60504 (2021); *Executive Order on Promoting Competition in the American Economy*, The White House (July 9, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> Cranor, L., Peha, J., Choy, C., Young, E., Li, M, *Making Broadband Internet Labels Useful and Usable: Preliminary Report on Consumer-Driven Broadband Label Design*, Carnegie Mellon University (Oct. 24, 2022).

<sup>3</sup> *The President's Initiative on Junk Fees and Related Pricing Practices*, The White House (Oct. 26, 2022).

If a monthly bill requirement is not achievable in the forthcoming order, we urge the Commission to reconsider the question in a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking.

We appreciate the Commission's ongoing efforts to make the broadband label a success. As consumers struggle with high inflation and junk fees, the need for truth-in-billing is especially acute. People deserve to know what they are paying for.

Sincerely,

Access Humboldt

Asian Americans Advancing Justice-AAJC

Benton Institute for Broadband & Society

Common Cause

Common Sense

Consumer Reports

Demand Progress Education Fund

Electronic Frontier Foundation

Free Press

Future of Music Coalition

Greenlining Institute

Institute for Local Self-Reliance

Massachusetts Law Reform Institute

Measurement Lab

MediaJustice

mohuman

National Broadband Mapping Coalition

National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of its low-income clients

National Consumers League

National Digital Inclusion Alliance

Next Century Cities

New America's Open Technology Institute

NTEN

OpenCape Corporation

OpenMedia

Professor Jon M. Peha, Carnegie Mellon University, former FCC Chief Technologist

Public Knowledge

Public Utility Law Project of New York

Ranking Digital Rights

United Church of Christ Media Justice Ministry

X-Lab