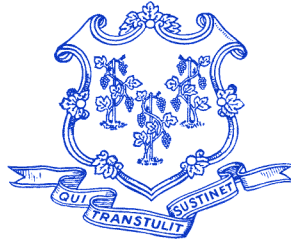


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Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff
Testimony in Support of
Senate Bill 4: *An Act Concerning Data Privacy, Net Neutrality, Cyber Security*
and Fairness in Data Usage in the New Age of a Digital Workforce
Energy and Technology Committee
March 9, 2021

Senator Needleman, Representative Arconti, Senator Formica, Representative Ferraro, and distinguished members of the Energy and Technology Committee, I would like to thank you for allowing me to submit testimony today in favor of Senate Bill 4, *An Act Concerning Data Privacy, Net Neutrality, Cyber Security and Fairness in Data Usage in the New Age of a Digital Workforce*.

When the internet was created, it was envisioned as an equal domain, one that would allow anyone with a connection to access it in its entirety. In the years since the internet was created, it has become an integral part of not only American life, but also the American economy. The digital economy now represents a growing portion of the economy and in the last year, since the start of the pandemic, we all have realized how dependent upon it we are. Our children are learning from home, many of us are working from home, and with the start of the new year the Connecticut Legislature has gone almost fully virtual, dependent on our internet upload and download speeds.

The Trump Administration's choice to repeal Net Neutrality endangered the innovation of our new economy. By repealing net neutrality, it is now possible for internet service providers to charge customers different prices for different internet services. It is possible for internet service providers to charge small businesses more than large companies to have their content delivered to consumers. It is possible for internet service providers to throttle back the speed of connection if the ISP deems a customer to be using too much data. It is even possible for internet service providers to block access to certain websites altogether if they wish.

Sadly, these fears have been borne out since the Administration's decision. In 2015, firefighters with an unlimited plan who were battling a wildfire in California had their data throttled back because their internet service provider felt that they were using too much data. Some providers

have already begun to slow down service to Youtube and Netflix unless the companies agree to pay a fee to the ISPs. These policies hurt both Connecticut businesses and consumers.

This bill would ensure a free and open internet here in Connecticut. It will prohibit any throttling, surcharging, or pay walling from internet service providers. In doing so, Connecticut residents will be given the freedom to use the internet as they choose, without being dictated to by large internet service providers. I thank the committee for raising this bill and ask that you give it a favorable report. I look forward to working with you as this bill moves forward.