

your State can't give you any protections. They can't say: Here's how we want the internet to be operating.

What will replace these enforceable net neutrality rules? Nothing. Chairman Pai will leave it to the internet service providers—to the big companies we all subscribe to—to regulate themselves. We will just put them on the honor system. We know the broadband industry—your cable, your wireless or telecommunications provider—cannot regulate themselves. They struggle to even show up on time to install or fix your service. Do we really trust the broadband industry to resist leveraging their internet gatekeeper role and putting their online competitors at an unfair disadvantage? Of course not.

What is Chairman Pai's silver lining in light of gutting all of these rules? He has proposed to keep some transparency rules, requiring the internet service providers—these broadband behemoths—to disclose their practices to consumers. What good is transparency when most Americans have little or no choice for high-speed broadband access? After all, 62 percent of Americans have one choice for high-speed fixed broadband. If a household's only choice for high-speed broadband is transparent about its plans to set up internet fast and slow lanes, the consumer has two choices: accept the internet provider's terms or live without the internet. That is not a real choice at all. People are not going to be living without the internet in the 21st century. You are going to pay whatever that company tells you, you are going to pay.

It is clear that most Americans do not want what the FCC is proposing. A record number of people—over 22 million—made their voices heard at the FCC. Americans know the internet—the world's greatest platform for commerce and communications—is at stake. Consider that, today, essentially every company is an internet company. In 2016, almost half of the venture capital funds invested in this country went toward internet-specific and software companies. That is \$25 billion of investment. To meet America's insatiable demand for broadband internet, U.S. broadband and telecommunications industry companies invested more than \$87 billion in capital expenditures in 2015. That is the highest rate of annual investment in the last 10 years.

We have hit the sweet spot. Investment in broadband and wireless technologies is high. Job creation is high. Venture capital investment in online startups is high. With these net neutrality protections in place, there is no problem that needs fixing, but under Chairman Pai's plan, broadband providers get exactly what they want—an unregulated Wild West where they can set up internet fast and slow lanes.

Chairman Pai proposes to have the FCC completely abdicate its rightful role to oversee telecommunications networks under title II of the Commu-

nications Act. Chairman Pai claims that the FTC—the Federal Trade Commission—provides a sufficient backstop to discriminatory behavior by the big broadband companies. That is simply not true.

Under the Federal Trade Commission regime, the big broadband barons would establish their own net neutrality policies, and if the internet service provider wants to block websites, slow down the competitors' content, or charge innovators and entrepreneurs to reach their customers, they will be free to do so. That is because the Federal Trade Commission can only step in if a broadband provider violates its own net neutrality policies, but what if the internet service provider has a written policy that charges websites for internet fast lanes? There is nothing the Federal Trade Commission can do about it because the broadband baron told you what they are going to do. They were transparent about what they were going to do, but you just have no recourse whatsoever going to the Federal Trade Commission. It is a false promise of protection that Chairman Pai is presenting.

The only way to protect a free and open internet is with strong net neutrality rules of the road, not voluntary guidelines. Chairman Pai's proposal would put the future of a free and open internet in the hands of big corporations and the powerful few at the expense of ordinary consumers all across our country. Our consumers will be tipped upside down and have money shaken out of their pockets because they will not have the protection of net neutrality provisions that are now the law but are soon to be wiped off of the law.

The Trump administration is waging an all-out assault on our core protections: the Affordable Care Act, the Paris climate accord, the Clean Power Plan. Now Trump's Federal Communications Commission has net neutrality in their sights. For all of those who rely on the free and open internet—whether it is for commerce, education, healthcare, entertainment—I urge you all to rise up and create a firestorm of opposition to this assault on net neutrality. This goes to the fundamental principles of nondiscrimination online. This is the greatest engine for commercial job development our country has ever seen. It is the engine for new companies to be started. It is the way in which young people are able to disrupt established companies, to take new concepts that create jobs but also benefit consumers across our country. That is the opportunity this represents, and it is also a powerful force for democracy, for everyone's voice being heard equally. That is what net neutrality is about. That is what the Trump-Chairman Pai Federal Communications Commission is about to end, and that is why we must fight. That is why I am so proud to be standing as part of this effort with our great

ranking member of the Commerce Committee, Senator BILL NELSON from the State of Florida, because this is a fight worth having.

I yield the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, one cannot say it much better than the Senator from Massachusetts has said it. Everyone has come to expect a free and open internet—one that does not charge more for certain content and charge less for favorite content. It is supposed to be free. It is supposed to be open. It should be balanced. Hopefully, since it seems that the Pai regime is, in fact, going down this road, there will be immediate lawsuits that will be very time-consuming. At the end of the day, sometime in the future, there may be an opportunity for a legislative solution, but it has to be a balanced solution that protects the right of the public to a free and open internet.

PUERTO RICO RECOVERY EFFORT

Madam President, I want to discuss another issue.

What do you think it would be like to be in your home for 3 months without electricity when all of your home appliances and all of your daily routines have been built around the fact that electricity has provided the power to run your home in the way that you would expect?

Do you know that half of the people of Puerto Rico, 3 months after Hurricane Maria, still do not have electricity? Is it any wonder that 160,000 people—our fellow citizens from Puerto Rico—have now chosen to get on an airplane and go to the State of Florida? Is it any stretch of the imagination that there will not be hundreds of thousands more? They see a land that was devastated by a category 4 hurricane—that verged on a category 5—and that covered the entire island, with remote parts of the island having been completely cut off for 2½ weeks from transportation to get there, except by air, like the town of Utuado, which is up in the mountains, that I visited shortly after the hurricane.

Is it any wonder that people like them are now being very creative and very inventive? There are neighbors helping neighbors. They are all coming together. But they have been without electricity for such a long period of time that the opportunities for jobs are drying up, businesses cannot open, and commerce has slowed. With a \$250 plane ticket, in 2 hours they can be in Florida, and, indeed, that is what has happened—160,000, as of now, just to Florida. How many have gone to New York and to other States? We do not have that calculation, but we expect several hundred thousand more to go.

For all who come here, the island of Puerto Rico is their home. They want to return, but is there going to be a quick resumption of business? In its contracting through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is FEMA going to get the electricity back up? Are there

going to be jobs? Are we going to change the tax law so that Puerto Rico does, in fact, have the incentives that it used to have in the past that had taken pharmaceutical companies there and rum companies there? A lot of those tax incentives have gone away, and we ought to be considering that in this tax bill. We ought to be considering the long-term cost that it is going to take to help restore the island. Until that is done, what do you think people have done? This is exactly what they have done, and they are going to continue to come.

As a result, we have a different problem in a State in which so many of their families already live and where they have been living with relatives. Now it is time for them to be able to have their own families and their own places to live. Yet we do not have the provisions in order to give them the financial support to be able to afford housing. Suppose 300,000 Puerto Ricans go to Florida alone. Do they have the money? Are they able to get jobs right away so that they will have the money for housing? That is why we are going to have to have financial incentives.

That is why, in a bill that was filed last week by this Senator, along with several others, there is a provision—if we can pass this legislation—for HUD, or the Department of Housing and Urban Development, to have the financial wherewithal to then supply housing needs, many times through subsidized housing, in the case of an incident like this hurricane, in which an emergency has occurred and has caused a huge dislocation of people to another State.

Since it is going to be hard to get legislation like this passed in a timely fashion and the need is desperate right now and since the last supplemental emergency appropriation for all of the hurricanes did not include the housing part for the ones who are going to Florida, in the meantime, in this next supplemental that will come just before Christmas—emergency supplemental funding—we will need to provide that.

Then the question will be this: Where, for example, in Central Florida—in the Orlando metro area—will they actually be able to find housing that will be available without their having to drive hundreds of miles to find housing that will be affordable, even with additional assistance? The people who can work this problem out are in the local governments. They are the ones who know best the situation.

As we get ready before Christmas for a final appropriations bill with emergency supplemental funding because of all of the hurricanes, which, indeed, will come—it will just be the next installment of many installments to come in the new year—let us remember that housing is going to be critical for a huge number of people who have been dislocated and have to strike out and find new lives, new jobs, and new places to call home, which clearly means that they will have to have places to call

home, and those are places to live—housing. It is an urgent need, and it is one that is critical. This Congress has to face it before the holidays.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORAN). The Senator from Ohio.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, right now, as we all return from Thanksgiving—some of the American people did not have to work over Thanksgiving weekend, but many, many people in this country do and struggle and continue to work two jobs—and as Congress returns from Thanksgiving, the priorities of this Congress are becoming pretty darned clear to the American people. People want to know the answer to a fundamental question. In this body we all stand up for election every 6 years—in some cases, a little more often—and people fundamentally want to know which side you are on. Are you on their side? Are you on the side of Wall Street or the side of corporations that outsource jobs?

So the question is this: Whose side are you on? The question is this: Are you going to stand with multinational corporations that ship jobs overseas, all to pad their own executives' fat bonus checks? Are you going to stand with banks that rip off consumers or that steal their information and get off scot-free? Maybe some of their executives give their bonuses back, but that is about the only penalty they pay. Are you going to stand with American workers who have been working too hard for too long for too little pay and who are just looking to catch a break? Are you going to stand with children whose parents work two jobs to put food on the table when, unfortunately, both jobs that they work do not pay for health insurance? These are the choices we face.

Right now, the leader of the Senate—the majority leader, who works in that office down the hall, the majority leader back in that office there—negotiates with lobbyists, negotiates healthcare bills, and writes healthcare bills in the back room with drug company lobbyists and insurance lobbyists. Now he has written a tax bill in the back room. We voted on it last week in committee, but it just keeps changing. That is all done in the back room with Senator McCONNELL, the Republican leader, and his lobbyist friends from corporate America—with the corporate America that ships jobs overseas, with the Wall Street banks that fleece Main Street taxpayers, and with other corporations, which are the drug companies and oil companies and the Koch brothers and all of that. These are the choices that we face. The leaders of the Senate have made it really clear whose side they are on—period.

While the Senate spends its time on a bill to cut taxes for corporations that send jobs overseas—that is the bill that Senator McCONNELL is negotiating, is writing, is drafting with his lobbyist friends in that office down the hall—

children here in America, pure and simple—there is no other way to say it—are about to be kicked off of their health insurance through the Children's Health Insurance Program. As soon as this week, families of young children are going to get letters in the mail that will bring devastating news—that their children will lose their health insurance—period. There are 209,000 of them who live in my State of Ohio—209,000 of them alone.

This is what this program is. It was founded more than two decades ago. Senator HATCH—I give him credit as chairman of the Finance Committee—doesn't seem as interested, frankly, in this bill today as he was when he started, when he wrote the bill, because it has passed out of his committee, and Senator McCONNELL is too busy to put this bill on the floor so that we can pass it.

The bill works this way: If there is a family and the parents lose their insurance, as many families do, the children still get insurance. That is why 209,000 children—tens of thousands of families in my State—rely on the Children's Health Insurance Program. But this fall, because this Congress is too busy giving tax cuts to rich people, because this Congress is too busy giving all kinds of breaks to the Nation's banks, because this Congress is too busy doing the bidding of the drug companies and the health insurance companies and the bidding of the oil companies, this Congress let CHIP expire.

States are beginning to run out of money for CHIP. States are preparing to shut down this lifeline for 9 million children in Kansas, Ohio, Florida, and all over the country. Folks in this body—don't forget, we all get our health insurance funded by taxpayers, but we haven't done our job. As a result, families of 209,000 children in Ohio and 9 million children in the United States are going to pay the price.

Think about how devastating it would be to get that letter in the mail. It is already an expensive and stressful time of year. Parents are worried about all kinds of things—higher heating bills, visits to their families for the holidays, the cost of childcare when kids take off from school for the holidays. They are scraping together what they can for gifts. They are already stressed enough. Imagine having to tell your daughter: I am sorry, honey, Santa probably isn't bringing much this year. We won't have any presents under the tree.

You try not to let the child see the worry in your eyes because you are wondering how you are going to afford the debt for regular checkups each year, or God forbid she gets an ear infection or something happens and she needs to go to the doctor. But, oh my gosh, no, we got this letter in the mail that says—and I don't know if the letter will say it this way, but it should—that because Congress failed to do its job—a bunch of elected officials who have insurance paid by taxpayers failed