



December 14, 2015

TO MEMBERS OF THE U.S. SENATE:

Dear Senator,

The undersigned associations, representing companies that collectively provide Internet access services to broadband subscribers across America, write to express our strong support for the conference report on H.R. 644, which would permanently extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act (ITFA). We urge a yes vote on the conference report and ask you to oppose any proposal to strip the current language making ITFA permanent.

Over the nearly 17 years since ITFA was enacted, the Internet has become an engine for economic growth, opportunity, and inclusion while American consumers have been shielded from having their broadband access subject to the myriad of discriminatory taxes and fees that apply to traditional telecommunications services, often at rates twice that of general sales taxes—11.5% on average but as high as 17% in some places. Because of this bipartisan policy achievement, most Americans have never paid these taxes on their broadband access.

This success – begun during the Clinton Administration, and continued through the Bush Administration and thus far through the Obama Administration – is at risk because ITFA will expire this year unless Congress acts. Expiration would likely increase the cost of broadband access as it would become vulnerable to new onerous telecommunication taxes and fees, an imminent threat due to the Federal Communications Commission's recent reclassification of broadband services as a Title II telecommunications service. At a time when promoting broadband adoption is a national priority, Congress should ensure that every American can afford to participate in the digital economy by making the expiring ban on Internet access taxation permanent.

We urge you to support H.R. 644 and all procedural votes necessary to protect consumers from new regressive state and local taxation of Internet access. Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Powell'.

Michael Powell
President & CEO
National Cable &
Telecommunications Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Baker'.

Meredith Attwell Baker
President & CEO
CTIA – The Wireless Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Walter B. McCormick, Jr.'.

Walter B. McCormick, Jr.
President & CEO
United States Telecom Association