

‘Major Win’: California Senate Passes Bill Restoring Net Neutrality

"We need to do everything we can to ensure that the people of California can decide for themselves whether, when, and for what purpose they are using the internet," says bill's author

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Featured image: The California state Senate votes Wednesday on SB 822, which would restore net neutrality protections. (Photo: [Free Press/ Free Press Action Fund](#)/flickr/cc)

Update: The California state Senate on Wednesday [voted](#) to pass a bill restoring net neutrality protections. SB 822 passed 23-12 along party lines, with all Republicans voting against it.

"Today the State Senate took a huge step towards re-instating net neutrality in California," said Democratic state Senator Scott Wiener, author of the bill. "When Donald Trump's FCC took a wrecking ball to the Obama-era net neutrality protections, we said we would step in to make sure that California residents would be protected from having their internet access manipulated. I want to thank the enormous grassroots coalition that is fighting tooth and nail to help pass SB 822 and protect a free and open internet. We have a lot more work to get this bill through the Assembly, but this is a major win in our fight to re-instate net neutrality in California."

Earlier:

With the California state Senate on the cusp of voting on a net neutrality bill Wednesday, its advocates are urging constituents to grab their phones to demand their legislators stand up for an open internet.

CALIFORNIA: ISPs have descended on Sacramento to stop [#SB822](#) — which would save [#NetNeutrality](#) in CA. If this bill is going to pass, your senator needs to hear from you. Call them NOW! 916-823-9612.

— Free Press (@freepress) [May 30, 2018](#)

[SB 822](#)—a bill [deemed](#) the "gold standard for states looking to protect net neutrality" in the face of the federal [rollback](#) by the Republican-controlled FCC in December—was authored by state Sen. Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco), and has advanced despite [attacks](#) by internet service providers (ISPs).

As Katharine Trendacosta, policy analyst at Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) explains,

the bill “would prevent ISPs in California from engaging in blocking, throttling, paid prioritization, and anti-competitive zero rating. Blocking and throttling are what they sound like: preventing access to or slowing down access to any service or content an ISP chooses.”

“At its core,” a press statement from Weiner’s office says, “SB 822 stands for the basic proposition that the role of internet service providers (ISPs) is to provide neutral access to the internet, not to pick winners and losers by deciding (based on financial payments or otherwise) which websites or applications will be easy or hard to access, which will have fast or slow access, and which will be blocked entirely.”

ISPs aren’t letting up on their fight to defeat the measure.

The *Mercury News* [reported](#) Tuesday:

SB 822 is opposed by the broadband, cable and telecom industries, plus the state’s Chamber of Commerce.

AT&T, Comcast and two major industry trade groups reported spending nearly \$1 million on lobbying in Sacramento in the first three months of the year alone—including against SB 822—according to documents filed with the California Secretary of State.

According to Gigi Sohn, a Distinguished Fellow at the Georgetown Law Institute for Technology Law & Policy and a Mozilla Technology Policy Fellow, “Cable companies are flooding the California Senate with lobbyists working 24-7 against #SB822.” Demand Progress added: “AT&T is spreading anti-SB 822 propaganda at the state house.”

Cable companies are flooding the California Senate with lobbyists working 24-7 against [#SB822](#). The only way to win is for YOU to call your state Senator NOW at 916-823-9612 to restore [#netneutrality](#) to California. <https://t.co/URttdXx5SZ>

— Gigi Sohn (@gigibsohn) [May 30, 2018](#)

The California State Senate is about to vote on [#SB822](#). that would save [#NetNeutrality](#) in CA! AT&T is spreading anti-SB 822 propaganda at the state house, so it's important you call your senator NOW! Click here to make a call: <https://t.co/vKQIWYSSWb>

— Demand Progress (@demandprogress) [May 29, 2018](#)

Weiner, for his part, joined organizations including Color of Change and the Center for Media Justice in Sacramento on Tuesday at a rally in support of SB 822.

“Net neutrality impacts everyone in our state, and we need to do everything

we can to ensure that the people of California can decide for themselves whether, when, and for what purpose they are using the internet,” he declared.

Today, we and other believers in an open Internet are in Sacramento telling California to protect [#NetNeutrality](#). Add your voice to theirs by calling your state senator. <https://t.co/WbsrS6WMgm> pic.twitter.com/w3aOM9KDhf

— EFF (@EFF) [May 29, 2018](#)

If the bill passes the state Senate Wednesday, it then heads to the Assembly.

At the federal level, meanwhile, net neutrality supporters have their sights set on a Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution to restore open internet protections. The Senate [passed](#) the resolution this month, so now its proponents [are focused](#) on achieving a similar victory in the House.

“The fight ahead is not going to be easy, ” charged Fight for the Future, “but victory is within reach.”

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