

The U.S. Distance Learning Association issued a response today with the Federal Communications Commission urging the commissioners to expand access to affordable, high-speed broadband service for thousands of Americans who rely on internet access for educational opportunities. They also warned the commission that efforts to implement net neutrality and impose additional regulations would put broadband expansion efforts at risk.

"The innovation that distance learning has witnessed in the past few years has led to increased broadband adoption and affordability," said Dr. John Flores, president of USDLA. "For this reason we oppose net neutrality regulations, which could potentially raise the cost of broadband and lessen the investments necessary for deploying broadband networks for the next generation of students."

As the Internet evolves, and as congestion, security and other challenges grow, new and innovative methods and technologies must grow with them to meet these challenges. "The most effective way to meet these challenges, and best serve the needs of thousands of distance learning students, is private sector innovation, rather than government regulation," Dr. Flores said.

New regulations proposed by the FCC would include making a series of "principles" permanent, and would initiate a series of new principles that include net neutrality provisions. These new provisions would apply new restrictions to internet providers, reducing private investment and slowing the expansion of broadband access.

The U.S. Distance Learning Association was formed to promote the development and application of distance learning for education and training. The learning communities that USDLA addresses are: pre K-12, higher education, continuing education, corporate training, military and government training, home schooling and telemedicine. In addition, USDLA is also focused on national and international technology-based Distance Learning. www.usdla.org

Source: U.S. Distance Learning Association