



**WRITERS GUILD
OF AMERICA WEST**

April 11, 2018

The Honorable Scott D. Wiener
Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities & Communications
State Capitol, Room 4035
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for SB 822 (Wiener) – Restoring Net Neutrality in California

Dear Senator Wiener:

Writers Guild of America West (WGAW) strongly supports SB 822, "Restoring Net Neutrality in California." Now that the FCC has abdicated its authority to protect a free and open Internet, California has a responsibility to fill that void. Senate Bill 822 is comprehensive legislation that includes the necessary provisions to protect consumers and prevent ISPs from becoming gatekeepers who decide what content reaches Californians.

For more than ten years, WGAW has been a vocal advocate for an open Internet. For our members, the open Internet has enhanced competition and increased buyers for the content they create. It has also opened up new opportunities for underrepresented voices by expanding the demand for independent and diverse content, but only because the open Internet provides non-discriminatory access to viewers. Net neutrality protections have facilitated the growth of the online video market, which has led to "peak TV." In 2017, WGAW members worked on more than 100 original online video series, many of which were written and produced in California.

But all of this progress is threatened in the absence of open Internet rules. ISPs have the power to act as gatekeepers of content and the stifle the free market in ways that benefit their bottom lines but not the broader economy or society. When they do, California consumers will have little recourse because nearly 70% of California's population have only one option for high-speed broadband service.

WGAW supports SB 822 particularly because it will:

- Reinstatement critical protections from the FCC's 2015 Open Internet Order that prevent ISP's from blocking or throttling content or engaging in paid prioritization;
- Provide necessary protections for consumers regarding zero rating and differential pricing;
- Provide concrete mechanisms to enforce prohibitions and regulations on discriminatory practices; and

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- Ensure transparency by protecting consumers from deceptive marketing practices.

On behalf of our 10,000 members, we thank you for your leadership and strongly urge the State Senate to pass SB 822 to restore the open Internet in California.

Sincerely,



David A. Goodman
President



Marjorie David
Vice President



Aaron Mendelsohn
Secretary-Treasurer

CC: Members of the Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee
Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee