# FCC Opens NPRM on Net Neutrality, Won’t Move to Reclassify ISPs

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The FCC is hoping to preserve so-called net neutrality rules without reclassifying broadband providers as common carriers.

In a conference call with media on background this morning, an FCC Official said Commissioner Wheeler has issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) that aims to draft new "rules of the road."

The FCC hopes that for the time being, broadband providers will stay true to the old rules, which were struck down [1] by a D.C. Court of Appeals, which declared the FCC did not have authority to regulate broadband providers because they aren't classified as common carriers.

However, the FCC reads that Court's opinion as having reaffirmed the FCC's right to foster competition and infrastructure deployment by preserving the rights of what the FCC official referred to as "edge providers," or companies that provider content and services over the networks.

"In its Verizon v. FCC decision, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit invited the Commission to act to preserve a free and open Internet," FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler, said in a statement. "I intend to accept that invitation by proposing rules that will meet the court’s test for preventing improper blocking of and discrimination among Internet traffic, ensuring genuine transparency in how Internet Service Providers manage traffic, and enhancing competition."

The FCC will consider rules that focus on three core objectives, namely to prohibit the outright blocking of any service or type of content. The official also said it will draft rules that prohibit ISPs from discriminating against edge providers. The Commission also promised to enhance and enforce rules that require ISPs to be transparent in reporting exactly how they manage traffic over their networks.

Additionally, the official said that the commission will look into doing away with rules that currently prohibit municipalities and local governments from deploying their own Internet services as a way of increasing competition with private companies.

"The chairman's view is that we should add alternatives rather than subtract them," the official said.

As with the old rules, wireless carriers would still be granted exceptions when it comes to the discrimination clause, as applications such as video have been shown

to have significant impact on mobile networks.

In his statement, Wheeler said the FCC would forego further judicial review of the earlier decision and would keep Title II authority on the table, with the ability to reclassify Internet access service as a telecommunications service.

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[1] http://www.wirelessweek.com/news/2014/01/appeals-court-strikes-down-net-neutrality-rules