

(Washington DC) Yesterday, during consideration of the bill to update the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Congressman Edward J. Markey of Massachusetts offered an amendment on ‘Net Neutrality,’ which was defeated 22-34. Congressman Gonzalez issued the following statement to explain his no vote:

“On its face, the Markey amendments seems fair, but the more you look at the implications of this legislation, the less fair it seems. Its most immediate consequence would be to exempt highly profitable companies like Microsoft Yahoo and Google from having to pay to use another company's cable network. In essence, this would allow Internet giants to reap the benefits of operating a cable network with none of the risks or costs. Forcing cable providers to give a free-ride to companies like Microsoft Yahoo and Google will ultimately work against consumers by undermining the financial incentive to develop the next generation of network technologies. It would also subsidize the efforts of companies like Microsoft Yahoo and Google to expand their dominance of most Internet commerce and to use their brand power to force smaller companies to partner rather than compete against them.

This amendment at first glance appears to be about consumers and small internet startups but in reality the primary beneficiary of this amendment would be the owners of the largest Internet companies in the world. In the final analysis, the Markey amendment would permanently set in place a system that would prohibit the spreading of the cost for building, maintaining and improving networks among all network users (i.e., ISPs, content providers.) And, this would leave the consumer to foot the bill for the major ISPs and content providers.”