(1) Net neutrality, simply put, is the idea that ISPs (internet service providers) should not be able to limit the usage of our internet, and provide equal and fair speeds for all. For example, repealing net neutrality could allow ISPs to package social media apps and websites and sell it individually. This package may not include other popular websites such as YouTube or Netflix, which could be in its own media package, and the price of internet can significantly increase. This would not only hurt average citizens, but is also not healthy for a free market.

(2) The repealing of net neutrality can lead to both a limitation of internet use and having to spend more on it. We currently are not limited to what we can access through our internet plans. Repealing net neutrality could lead to consumers having to make a decision of being limited to what they can access, or having to pay more in order to not lose what they previously had. This will negatively impact most consumers, and can lead to an even bigger gap in the digital divide.

(3) Net neutrality can affect internet service providers in different ways. It is likely that large companies such as Comcast will have an easier ability to eliminate competition from smaller ISPs, and create a monopoly within the industry. Other small companies such as Sonic believe it may actually help their business. In an email to NBC news from CEO Dane Jasper, she said that she does not believe it hurts smaller companies such as theirs but rather promotes competition, and that “it is advocating to keep the existing framework” (Newcomb, 2017).

(4) In 2015, the FCC ruled in favor of The Open Internet Order, which has helped establish the internet as we know it. It put limitations on ISP’s so that they could not put limitations on internet access and speeds. It has allowed for everyone to have a relatively similar
internet experience, and has helped remove a digital divide for internet users. It has helped small internet providers to get business, and prevented larger companies from monopolizing the industry.

(5) Just last month, the FCC voted to pass the Restoring Internet Freedom Order, which will remove the limitations the Open Internet Order brought. Their argument for it is that the internet market has not reached its potential, and that the previous rules and limitations hurt the industry. Again, this will hurt most internet consumers and increase the digital divide as ISPs will now have the ability to limit internet access and throttle speeds. It is likely that larger ISPs will gain even more control in the market, and the future for smaller companies is uncertain.

(6) There are two major ethical issues in regards to net neutrality. The first is that the repealing of net neutrality gives too much power to ISPs and allows them to easily increase the digital divide among consumers. The second being that a very small group of people, who were not voted into their positions, are the ones voting on a decision that will impact a very large portion of America. An issue of this caliber should not be decided by a group such as this, as the interest of the individuals in the FCC may be more focused on the market potential and benefitting large companies.

(7) I firmly believe net neutrality must remain to be neutral and that repealing it will result in much more negative effects than positive. We are contradicting ourselves when we say America is striving for equality and opportunity, and then further increase the digital divide amongst internet users. It is an attack on our internet freedom. There are several ethical and logical issues that come with repealing net neutrality, and it seems obvious that these issues greatly outweigh any positive outcomes that can come from it.
The idea behind repealing net neutrality is focused on allowing ISPs to make more money in ways they previously couldn’t due to their previous limitations by the Open Internet Order. Meryl Kremer provides an example in an article of hers. She suggests that companies could have an app for their customers to use, where they can then pay a higher premium to increase their speeds, and again further increasing the digital divide. (Kremer, 2017) This should already be a red flag for most people. It is not ethical for a group of people to make a decision that is focused on improving large ISPs where the decision can negatively affect most Americans.

As I mentioned previously, repealing net neutrality has the potential to either reduce or completely eliminate business of smaller ISPs. Kremer also mentioned that “...larger businesses who can afford to pay preferential treatment can easily eliminate their smaller competition simply by funding partnerships with ISP providers” (Kremer, 2017). Removing our previous limitations provided by the Open Internet Order can far too easily allow big ISPs to monopolize the industry, and wipe out other smaller businesses. A group of forty small ISPs sent a letter to Ajit Pai, FCC Chairman, mentioning their concerns of the removal of their limitations. “We have reservations about any plan at the FCC that seeks to enhance their market power without any meaningful restraints on their ability to monopolize large swaths of the internet” (Newcomb, 2017). Net neutrality has allowed for small ISPs to remain in businesses, and limited large ISPs from wiping them.

It amazes me that we currently having this debate in our country. Repealing net neutrality is an attack on our internet freedom. It is an attack on smaller internet service
providers. It is focused only on improving larger ISPs and the market potential for them, and we as Americans need to fight for our internet freedom.
Works Cited
