

An Open Letter to Congress from U.S. Business

Dear Members of Congress:

The Internet is the greatest platform for innovation the world has ever known, and the greatest communication network yet devised. Our companies depend upon its stable and secure future.

The Internet's addressing system helps keep the Internet global, scalable and interoperable. An important proposal to assure the continuing security, stability and resiliency of this system has recently been approved by the Board of Directors of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and delivered to the U.S. government.

In March 2014, the U.S. Department of Commerce announced a plan to transition its historical stewardship of the Internet's addressing system to the global Internet community. This plan represents the final stage of the development of ICANN, as a private-sector led, multi-stakeholder organization to coordinate Internet addresses. At the time of their announcement, the Commerce Department asked ICANN to convene the global community of Internet stakeholders to produce a transition proposal.

Our companies and trade associations are proud and active members of this community. We have worked with representatives from civil society, government, and the technical community to craft a proposal that enables the U.S. Government to seamlessly transfer stewardship of the Internet's addressing system to its global stakeholders.

The proposal delivered last month meets the criteria set out by the Commerce Department two years ago. Furthermore, it includes significant and concrete measures to enhance ICANN's accountability to its global community. We recognize that additional important work remains, including properly revising ICANN's bylaws and further improving ICANN's practices and procedures. It is imperative that this work be accomplished in a timely and effective manner and we look forward to ensuring that it does.

The Internet is defined by its inclusivity and openness. Those critical characteristics are reflected in the work that – over the course of many months of open, transparent and inclusive discussion -- went into the drafting of this transition proposal.

We congratulate those who worked tirelessly to develop the proposal and we celebrate the effort that will enshrine America's commitment to ensuring the future of a global, interoperable and stable global Internet.

