



# AP English Language Essay

## **Government And The Internet**

Should the federal government be allowed to regulate information on the internet? The internet has become a communication tool that our society widely depends on for entertainment, office work, domestic jobs and most importantly for educational research. For example, the internet is critical to the U.S. economy; the Hudson Institute analysis brought out findings that the information, communication and technology sector accounted for almost 10% of total economic growth of the U.S. between 2002 and 2007. This means that the sector was responsible for \$340 billion out of \$4.6 trillion increase in gross output at that time. On March 14th 2014, congress announced that it had plans to end the oversight role over ICANN - the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers and facilitate the transition to a private sector monitoring system upon which ICANN would operate on. This move would pose a threat to internet security, stability and openness (Paul Rosenzweig, Schaefer , & Gattuso, 2014).

The federal government regulating the internet will derail the freedom of the citizens. The first amendment of the Constitution expounds on the free speech and freedom of press rights that the American people cherish a lot. Regulating online content would be a direct violation of the amendment. Furthermore, an open internet encourages entrepreneurial activity where business people can promote different niches suitable to the customers; this will not only help the citizens but it will boost the economy. Regulating the internet will curtail this aspect and leave the people with limited options to be creative and innovative. If the internet is regulated, it means limiting the access to educational materials and therefore erasing the educational value of the internet. As much as there are a lot of dangers lurking by, the vast knowledge that can be earned sub passes them (Croston, 2012).

The move can spark flames of civil unrest just like it happened in Egypt when the government disabled the internet during their period of political unrest. This should serve as an example for it will cut peoples ability of communicating with the outside world. In addition, if the government regulates the internet, it will use a lot of funds that would otherwise be channeled to other sectors of the economy. Take for example manpower surveillance; the amount of filters and sifting that will have to be created through an infinite amount of information flowing through the net is absurd. This will require a lot of money to establish and maintain (Croston, 2012).

On the other hand, regulation of internet by the government will have a lot of benefits not only to the federal government but to its citizens. Internet crimes such as copyright theft, cyber terrorism, drug smuggling, defamatory, credit card fraud and virus and other malware should be deterred from affecting the citizens. The use of harmful content on the internet such as pornography and solicitation of children has brought about child abuse, and this justifies the reasons for internet regulation. In short, society is entitled to protection and can be done by enforcement of criminal law in relation to online activities, therefore enforcing internet regulation (Darlington, 2010).

In conclusion, the points discussed above makes it clear that the federal government should cease censoring what people can send or receive through the net. This is because the internet has formed important opportunities to share information facilitating exchange of ideas and knowledge. It has also acted as a pathway for pro-democracy groups and journalists who can hold governments accountable for its action at all times. In addition, the misuse of the internet by some individuals that committed cyber crimes should not be the sole reason for regulating the entire medium. Laws in place are enough to bring stability and safety into society, and the internet should not be used as a scapegoat for rules that are dealing with social tension.

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