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## Internet regulation stifles innovation

USA TODAY's story [Web traffic jams bring fight over fast-lane fees](#) leaves the false impression that efforts to ensure speedy delivery of movies, games and other offerings over DSL broadband lines would create a "two-tiered market" and hurt consumers (Money, Feb. 7).

The story does say that "bottlenecks are increasing as more consumers use bandwidth-intensive applications, such as video, over broadband lines. When bottlenecks happen, videos may download more slowly. Live webcasts freeze up. Calls on Internet-based phone services break up a bit." Thus, no one can claim that the status quo is "pro-consumer."

So what is the solution?

Can there be any doubt that the free market — not government mandates — will best advance consumer interests just as it has fostered dramatic expansion of online services in the past 10 years?

Government regulation of the Internet would merely stifle online innovation without helping consumers.

Despite concerns raised in USA TODAY's report, the public's unfettered access to the Internet will not change. If consumers want an additional level of speed and they are willing to pay for it, they can. Just as they can today, with the different levels of broadband speeds for Internet access, from 56K dial-up all the way to 30 megabits per second over fiber — different speeds and different rates for different consumer needs.

This is a win-win situation for consumers and the industry.

Value-added or premium services for consumers will help fund further investment in broadband capacity which, at the end of the day, is what makes the whole industry move forward and makes the Internet in general work better and faster for future consumers.

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