

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



March 25, 2002

MAP FILES SUIT CHALLENGING FCC INTERNET CABLE RULING - CASE TO DECIDE FUTURE OF "OPEN ACCESS"

The Media Access Project today filed a lawsuit on behalf of three citizens groups to challenge the Federal Communications Commission's classification of Internet access delivered via cable modems to be an "information service." If not reversed in court, the FCC's March 14, 2002 action effectively freed cable operators from having to provide non-discriminatory "open access" to the public.

MAP's clients are the Consumer Federation of America, Consumers Union and the Center for Digital Democracy. The case was filed in the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

MAP's President Andrew Jay Schwartzman emphasized that, in addition to the important impact that "open access" has on the right of customers to have a choice of internet service providers, the legal status of cable modem service has important First Amendment ramifications as well. He said that

The Internet is a medium which the public uses to engage in constitutionally protected social, artistic and political discourse, as well as to receive information. Without non-discriminatory open access, cable operators retain the legal right to censor messages, to limit the size and nature of files which can be uploaded and downloaded and to favor content provided by their commercial "partners" and "preferred vendors."

MAP is a 29 year-old non-profit public interest law firm which represents the public's First Amendment rights to speak and to receive information via the electronic mass media.

Contact:

Andrew Jay Schwartzman

(202) [454-5681](tel:454-5681)/andys@mediaaccess.org

NOTICE TO RECIPIENTS OF THIS MESSAGE: MAP IS REVISING ITS PRESS LISTS. PLEASE NOTIFY MAP VIA FAX, PHONE OR EMAIL (INFO@MEDIAACCESS.ORG) IF YOU HAVE A PREFERRED MEDIUM FOR RECEIVING RELEASES.