

## CONNECT Cautiously Endorses FCC Chairman's Open Internet Proposal

San Diego Start-ups meet Chairman to share innovation stories; support letter sent to Copps

*For Immediate Release*

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Washington D.C. – Yesterday, two CONNECT-related start-ups from San Diego met with Federal Communications Commission Chairman Julius Genachowski, Commissioner Mignon Clyburn and staff for Commissioner Michael Copps to share their story of how a free and open Internet will support start-up growth. Tom Baird, CEO of AppSmyth, and Tom Watlington, CEO of Sotera Wireless, joined several San Francisco based start-ups to represent the California innovation community in the meetings.

In conjunction with their meeting, CONNECT's D.C. Office Director, Timothy Tardibono, released an open letter to Commissioner Copps encouraging him to vote for the Chairman's Free and Open Internet Proposal that will be before the FCC in late December. In the letter Tardibono made the case that, "Although, the Chairman's Proposal takes a step further into the regulatory world than we'd ideally like, we recognize the practical and substantive benefits to the Chairman's Proposal." Tardibono went on to assert that through the Chairman's more modest approach, Internet-dependent start-ups, "will have the freedom and technical assurance they need to develop their creations and chase the American Dream."

One of the San Diego start-up representatives attending the meeting, Tom Baird of AppSmyth, believed the meetings were valuable in explaining the start-up innovation story to the FCC. After the meetings Baird stated, "I am hopeful that the current proposal on Internet neutrality will pass the FCC vote. After meeting with two commissioners and another's staff, I believe the sense of urgency that both small and large companies feel will help shape the Commission's decision and keep this from becoming a political football that slows commerce, investment and innovation. I was very pleased with the position that Chairman Genachowski has taken."

Tom Watlington of Sotera Wireless stated, "In the next 10-15 years, mobile wireless technologies, such as Sotera's, will revolutionize healthcare, improving the quality of care and reducing costs for millions of Americans. San Diego will be a leader in this emerging industry. However, this development depends on a strong Internet. The Chairman's Proposal is an important step to ensure that the Internet remains an accessible and affordable platform for innovation."

AppSmyth (<http://appsmyth.com/>) is currently developing a Smartphone applications platform for real world brands initially from the restaurant industry to connect with consumers via a branded virtual storefront on restaurant customer's mobile phones. The apps will deliver real time interactive marketing programs that can be microtargeted based on an individual's location, usage and purchasing habits.

Sotera Wireless (<http://www.soterawireless.com/main/>) has developed a new method for measuring continuous blood pressure without a cuff. The technology has expanded to become a platform for wireless body-worn patient monitoring.

CONNECT's open letter to Commissioner Copps ended by acknowledging the Commissioner's principled perspective but offered a different approach to analyzing the Chairman's Proposal. Tardibono said, "We appreciate and understand your previously stated position on this issue.

Nevertheless, we encourage you to support the Chairman's Proposal not as a call to abandon your principles, but to take the most practical and available step toward implementing a regulatory framework that will give stakeholders and the general public a real test of the intentions and behaviors of network gatekeepers. If under the Proposal, those gatekeepers act in inappropriate ways contrary to preserving a free and open Internet, the case to move toward more regulation will be strengthened. However, if network gatekeepers abide by the Proposal's new regulatory framework, we all get what we want—a free and open Internet coupled with gatekeeper transparency.”

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Media availability: Start-up CEOs Tom Baird and Tom Watlington, as well as CONNECT D.C. Office Director Timothy Tardibono are all available for follow-up interviews through the aforementioned media contacts.

See picture attached. From left, Tom Baird to the left of Chairman Genachowski and Tom Watlington is seated two places to the left of Tom Baird.