

Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Subcommittee Markup of H.R. ____ Affirming the Policy of the United States
Regarding Internet Governance
April 10, 2013

As we mourn the passing of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher this week, we are thankful for and inspired by her steadfast resolve and dedication to the cause of freedom. However, while the Cold War battles of the Iron Lady's day may be over, freedom and prosperity still have many foes.

Today, the Internet has become one of the world's most powerful forces for freedom and prosperity. It has revolutionized the global economy, while also providing access to information and free expression. However, this revolution occurred – and continues to develop – because the Internet has been able to flourish under the current multi-stakeholder model of governance.

Unfortunately, there is a movement to subject the Internet to governmental control, thereby threatening the possibilities for social and economic freedom around the world that the Internet enables. Developments at the World Conference on International Telecommunications last December in

Dubai moving this direction were troubling, and an indication that this issue is not going away.

Last year, Congress passed a resolution encouraging the U.S. delegation at the Dubai conference to “promote a global Internet free from government control.” The unanimous support for the resolution from both the House and Senate was instrumental in bolstering more than 50 nations to join the United States in opposing treaty proposals that would allow international regulatory bodies to subvert the management and structure of the Internet. International attempts to throttle the Internet continue to grow, however. That is why today we are taking the same language from last year’s resolution and elevating it to a statement of U.S. policy instead of just a sense of Congress about a specific treaty negotiation.

Going forward, it is critical that it becomes the policy of the United States to promote a global Internet free from government control and to preserve and advance the successful multi-stakeholder model that governs the Internet. Just as freedom must always be defended, the United States *must* stand steadfast in its defense and promotion of Internet Freedom.