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Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai is skipping the CES gadget show because of death threats, according to published reports. Pai has scrapped popular net neutrality rules that had barred broadband providers such as AT&T, Comcast and Verizon from interfering with internet traffic. The policy's supporters have reacted strongly. Pai and his staff have reported racist tweets and death threats against the chairman. The FCC's Dec. 14 vote on whether to drop the net neutrality rules was halted for unidentified security reasons, with a brief evacuation and search of the hearing room.

Pai was supposed to speak on a CES panel in Las Vegas next week. The Wall Street Journal, tech blog Recode and others reported the death threats, citing unidentified people. The FCC confirmed his withdrawal, but spokesman Brian Hart said the agency doesn't comment on security measures or concerns. – *Los Angeles Times*

An industry group that represents the country's biggest technology companies said on Friday that it planned to join a looming legal fight against the Federal Communications Commission over its [repeal of so-called net neutrality rules](#). In its announcement, the group, the Internet Association, made clear for the first time that Facebook, Google, Netflix and other large tech firms would put their reputations and financial clout behind the challenge.

Lawsuits seeking to block the commission's new policy, which was approved in December, are expected in the weeks ahead, once the rules take effect. The rules will let internet service providers block online content, or charge websites for faster delivery to consumers, by rolling back the protections against such actions that were adopted in 2015.

Several public interest groups, including Free Press and Public Knowledge, and some start-ups had announced plans to challenge the commission's move weeks ago, but the Internet Association had been undecided about how to respond. Before the commission voted on the repeal, some of America's biggest tech companies, Facebook and Google in particular, [took a back seat](#) during public protests over the issue.

On Friday, a day after the commission released [the 539-page final rules](#), the Internet Association said it would join the coming legal case against them. "The rule defies the will of a bipartisan majority of Americans and fails to preserve a free and open internet," Michael Beckerman, the association's chief executive, said on Friday. Netflix, whose data-heavy video streams could face extra charges by internet service providers, also said it would support a legal challenge. "In 2018, the Internet is united in defense of #NetNeutrality. As for the FCC, we will see you in court," the company said in a [message](#) posted on Twitter.

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the commission's action. "We'll be going to court soon to challenge the F.C.C. and ramping up pressure on Congress to throw the rules out altogether," said Craig Aaron, president of Free Press. Mr. Pai, he said, had "awakened the public."

The strong response to the repeal has also led to some safety concerns. At the commission meeting where the new rules were approved, law enforcement officials briefly cleared the room to address an unspecified security issue. – ***New York Times***

If your New Year's resolution was to watch less television, don't expect any help from Hollywood. The number of original scripted shows on streaming services such as Netflix, Hulu and Amazon Prime grew 30% in 2017, while overall scripted TV across all platforms was up 7%, according to data from FX Networks.

The total number of scripted shows in 2017 hit 487, according to FX's tabulations, surpassing the **previous record of 455** the year before. Since 2012, the number of scripted shows has jumped 69% from 288 programs. The data has become a staple of FX's presentations during the Television Critics Association's press tour, a semiannual event that's taking place in Pasadena, Calif.

FX Networks Chief Executive John Landgraf has often used the data to lament what he has dubbed **the era of "peak TV,"** in which shows face challenges finding enough creative talent and gaining traction with viewers in the age of disruption. Speaking to reporters Friday, Mr. Landgraf quoted the opening of Charles Dickens's classic "A Tale of Two Cities," saying: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."

Original shows on streaming services accounted for 117 of the 487 programs last year. But the number of scripted shows also grew on broadcast television and pay-cable channels such as HBO

The issue of regulating internet service providers to maintain an open internet has wound through the courts and the commission for more than a decade. The repeal in December, led by Ajit Pai, the commission chairman, attracted strong opposition. Mr. Pai has said the new rules would encourage more investment and innovation by internet service providers. He has also argued that the change would withstand any legal challenge, as it essentially restores the rules to what they were before 2015. The commission declined to comment on Friday.

Democratic lawmakers in Washington hope to reverse the commission's action by using the Congressional Review Act, and they have introduced numerous bills that could replace the agency's rules, although the prospects for those efforts appear weak. States lawmakers in California, New York and Washington are also considering bills that would recreate the 2015 net- neutrality rules in those states. Public interest groups are trying to make net neutrality an issue in this year's midterm elections. They have deployed text and email campaigns meant to pressure lawmakers to support a congressional reversal of

and Showtime—up 4.8% to 153 shows and 17% to 42 shows, respectively. There was a 4.3% decline in scripted shows on basic or commercial cable channels, down to 175 programs last year.

Mr. Landgraf was more upbeat about the potential acquisition of FX Networks, known for its dark and edgy content. FX Networks is among the [entertainment assets that 21st Century Fox is selling](#) to Walt Disney Co. for \$52.4 billion. Being part of a larger Disney empire that wants to compete with Netflix and offer lots of different styles of programming will “undoubtedly help our brand remain relevant,” he said. Disney Chief Executive Robert Iger “seems to have really wanted FX to be part of the larger plans and that we do something that’s unique,” Mr. Landgraf said. 21st Century Fox and Wall Street Journal parent News Corp share common ownership.

Mr. Landgraf also said the company had conducted an investigation into shows that actor and producer Louis C.K. was involved in for any inappropriate sexual behavior and found none. Following a New York Times article last year that described incidents of sexual misconduct around female comedians, Mr. C.K. [acknowledged his behavior](#) and expressed remorse. When the news of Mr. C.K.’s behavior broke, FX cut ties with him, and he is longer involved in producing shows there including “Better Things.” FX also removed episodes of Mr. C.K.’s critically acclaimed comedy “Louie” from its on-demand platforms. Asked if FX would eventually return the episodes to its on-demand platforms, Mr. Landgraf said he didn’t know. “I still think it’s a great show. If you thought it was art, it’s still art,” he said. — *Wall Street Journal*

