Equity Issues Relevant to Oregon Internet Access

How Regulated Cannabis Programs are Impacted by the "Digital Divide"

Information Tech Mandates in Cannabis Programs

Exacerbate Social Inequities

Actions Recommended

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Prepared for OCC Patient Access and Social Equity Subcommittee

July 1, 2020 Draft 1 for discussion

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What is the Digital Divide?

- A digital divide is any uneven distribution in the access to, use of, or impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) between any number of distinct groups. These groups may be defined based on social, geographical, or geopolitical criteria, or otherwise.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). (1995). Falling through the net: A survey of the have nots in rural and urban America. From http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/fallingthru.html Downloaded 6/29/2020

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Information Technology Social Equity Terms

- "Digital equity" refers to whether people can access and effectively use the (information) technology necessary to participate in [cannabis programs].

- "Digital inclusion," denotes efforts to remedy deficits in digital equity. Simply put, digital equity is what cities and states want, and digital inclusion is the work they and their partners are doing to create it.

  Adapted from: Zack Quaintance, assistant news editor for *Government Technology*.
  March 2018, downloaded 6/27/2020 https://www.govtech.com/civic/The-Quest-for-Digital-Equity.html

- "Digital Responsibility", denotes the social equity / public interest responsibility to use technology in a way that doesn't harm others, and to understand consequences of technology on health, environment, and society.

  Adapted from: K STANSBERRY, J ANDERSON, L RAINIE, Pew Research Center, Internet and Technology Center
  Oct 2019, downloaded 6/29/2020 https://www.govtech.com/civic/The-Quest-for-Digital-Equity.html

Ensure technology and information mandates:

Do not exceed minimal requirements.

All digital mandates should offer compensatory equity measures to impacted populations:

- Grants
- Internet access
- License Cost Waivers
- Training
- Direct support

pewresearch.org/internet/2019/10/28/5-leading-concerns-about-the-future-of-digital-life/

Pew Research Center *Internet & Technology*

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OCTOBER 28, 2019

EXPERTS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE NEXT 50 YEARS OF DIGITAL LIFE

5. Leading concerns about the future of digital life

BY KATHLEEN STANSBERRY, JANNA ANDERSON AND LEE RAINIE

The comments in the following section are a sharp contrast to the utopian visions of equity and advancement described above. Whereas some see the future of the internet as a great equalizer, others warn that technology can just as easily be used for control and exploitation.

Inequality on the rise: The growing divide between haves and have-nots
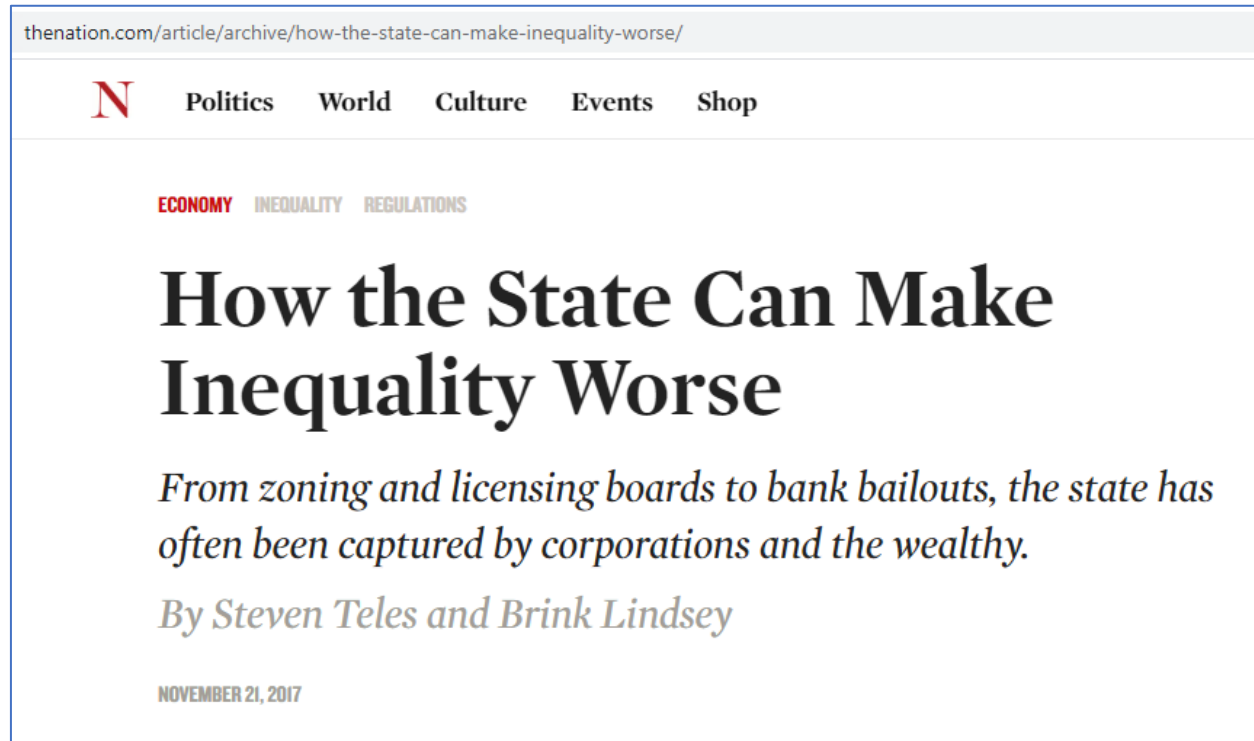
The majority of respondents to this study are in agreement that digital life is likely to improve the lives of people at the top of the socioeconomic ladder over the next few decades. A large share of those who predicted that internet use will produce change for the worse for most individuals over the next 50 years expressed concerns that an extension of current trends will lead to a widening economic divide that leaves the majority in the dust of the privileged class.

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Growing Awareness of Harms of Lobbyist Influenced Regulatory Programs

thenation.com/article/archive/how-the-state-can-make-inequality-worse/

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ECONOMY   INEQUALITY   REGULATIONS

How the State Can Make Inequality Worse

From zoning and licensing boards to bank bailouts, the state has often been captured by corporations and the wealthy.

By Steven Teles and Brink Lindsey

NOVEMBER 21, 2017

Metrc / CTS Requires Internet Access and Frequent Reporting

- A cost disadvantage, especially in Internet Poor Regions
- A training disadvantage
- A small business, limited resources disadvantage

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Immediate Steps to Take

- Remove Metrc CTS requirements for OMMP.

- Revisit essential reporting requirements for state fee collection, product traceability and other safety issues.

  - Data collection and reporting requirements occupy critical Internet bandwidth, and require sunk costs and levied nonbotanical and non-care giving tasks that limit OMMP participation in many sectors and communities

  - Evidence lacking that reporting measures function as sold or are optimally configured

  - Evidence growing that certain social classes are excluded from program participation because of these requirements (minority, rural, elderly, less educated and poor people).

Pandemic Emergency Warrants Immediate Response to Mitigate Digital Divide in OMMP

employeebenefitadviser.com/articles/the-coronavirus-will-make-the-digital-divide-even-worse

Employee Benefit Adviser

The coronavirus will make the digital divide even worse

April 22, 2020, 11:18 a.m. EDT

With demands of telework, tele-school, access and response, should limited broadband resources go to unproven, lobbyist-driven bloatware?

More on the Growing Digital Divide: New Frontiers in How Responsible Organizations Should Respond

DIGITAL RESPONSIBILITY

Taking Control of Your Digital Life

What does it mean to be digitally responsible?

We believe that it's our responsibility to use technology in a way that doesn't harm others and to be aware of the impact that technology has on our health, environment, and society at large.

Digital Divide: The Technology Gap between the Rich and Poor

Even as technology becomes more affordable and internet access seems increasingly ubiquitous, a "digital divide" between rich and poor remains. The rich and educated are still more likely than others to have good access to digital resources according to the Pew Internet & American Life Project. The digital divide has especially far-reaching consequences when it comes to education. For children in low-income school districts, inadequate access to technology can hinder them from learning the tech skills that are crucial to success in today's economy.

- According to the 2012 Pew Report "Digital Differences," only 62% of people in households making less than $30,000 a year used the internet, while in those making $50,000-74,999 that percentage jumped to 90.

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Additional Reading on Digital Divide

igi-global.com/gateway/chapter/21255

IGI Global Platform

Database Search ▾   Research Tools ▾   User Resources ▾
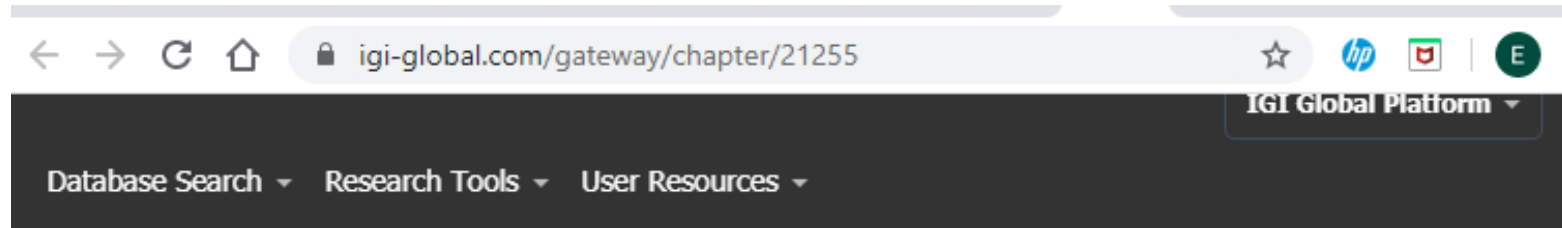
The Digital Divide and Social Equity ⊗

Alfred P. Rovai (Regent University, USA) and Emery M. Petchauer (Lincoln University, USA)

Source Title: Handbook of Research on Public Information Technology

Copyright: © 2008 | Pages: 9

ISBN13: 9781599048574 | ISBN10: 1599048574 | EISBN13: 9781599048581

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-59904-857-4.ch028

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Abstract

The Pew Internet and American Life Project (Pew/Internet; Lenhart, Horrigan, Rainie et al., 2003) reports 42 percent of Americans say they do not use the Internet, with 24 percent being truly off-line with no direct or indirect experience with the Internet. However, these percentages represent averages and don't pertain uniformly across all subpopulations. Pew/Internet (Fox, 2005) reports Americans age 65 and older, African-Americans, and those with less education lag behind others in Internet usage. The present article examines the impact of these differences on social equity in terms of receiving fair, just, and equitable treatment by the political system regarding public policies and services.

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A Growing Number of Organizations and Governments Are Working to Mitigate Digital Divide Shouldn't OMMP?

clasp.org/blog/digital-divide-builds-steeper-wall-inequality

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CLASP
Policy Solutions That Work For Low-Income People

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A Digital Divide Builds a Steeper Wall of Inequality

By **Yesenia Jimenez**, *Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow*

Liz Porter,
Health Environment Justice

Ongoing Efforts in Oregon

Did OMMP Consult to Determine Impact of Info Systems Mandate?

What Health and Safety Requirements are Requirements
(and Not Elective Data Mining) Are Necessary
to Justify Occupying Internet Bandwidth for Cannabis Reporting?

Review requirements carefully.
These have social justice implications.

For Required Internet Reporting, Subsidies should be provided to bridge the "Digital Divide", not exacerbate it. Revisit "requirements"; revisit costs to include equity measures needed.

To address these challenges, OBAC offers the following recommendations
- Create a dedicated state government broadband office.
- Provide state funding for new grant, loan and loan guarantee programs for broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas, and for matching funds to leverage federal funding programs.
- Repurpose and redesign the Oregon Universal Service Fund to be sustainable and to improve and subsidize *broadband* infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas.
- Provide support to low adoption populations and community anchor institutions, e.g., the FCC's E-rate Program, Healthcare Connect Fund and Lifeline programs.
- Promote broadband infrastructure deployment.
- Require that broadband infrastructure components such as conduit be included for all state funded infrastructure programs including roads, bridges, water, and wastewater projects.
- Remain technology and provider neutral. ⬅ **Marijuana Programs Have Info Technology Mandates**

Broadband is essential infrastructure for Oregon, its businesses, government, schools, libraries, utilities, healthcare providers, first responders and families.

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"Broadband is not a speed. It is the capacity to meet the social, cultural and economic demands of Internet users, which grow and evolve over time."
- Jonathan Chambers

OBAC believes that Oregon's broadband public policy needs to be focused on the future, be more aggressive, be more financially supportive, be more specific, and have a renewed sense of urgency.

OBAC has observed and frequently reported that "broadband" is a moving target and that broadband infrastructure will always be a work in progress. This is critical for the assessment of *Broadband in Oregon*. The Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) current benchmark for broadband is 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream, and that bar will be raised in the future due to improving technologies, the introduction of new applications and ever increasing end-user demand. This means that the digital divide not only continues to exist, but will grow without new and continued investment in broadband infrastructure. This means that Oregon communities that do not have access to today's or tomorrow's national standards for broadband services will not be able to adequately support long term economic growth.

Key Broadband Challenges and Opportunities

OBAC has identified the following key broadband challenges and opportunities facing Oregon.

- Digital Inclusion: Oregon needs state-level strategies and programs to ensure that all individuals and communities have access to affordable state of the art broadband communications services, and the skills, knowledge and technical support needed to use them.
- Cyber Security: The security of data and communications systems continues to be a critical risk exposure for government, public organizations, private sector businesses, and for individuals that is widely unrecognized and under managed. Oregon needs to follow-through on its 2017 cyber security initiatives www.cyberoregon.com. Ongoing, expanded and pro-active cyber risk management is needed.

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Connect America Fund Phase 2 – Oregon

"CAF2 is aimed at improving service to rural high cost to serve areas. Low population density and terrain are major deployment challenges."

Costs and Requirements Levied onto the Regulated Community and Their Impacts Must Be Considered to Address Systemic Social Equity Issues in "Digital Divide"
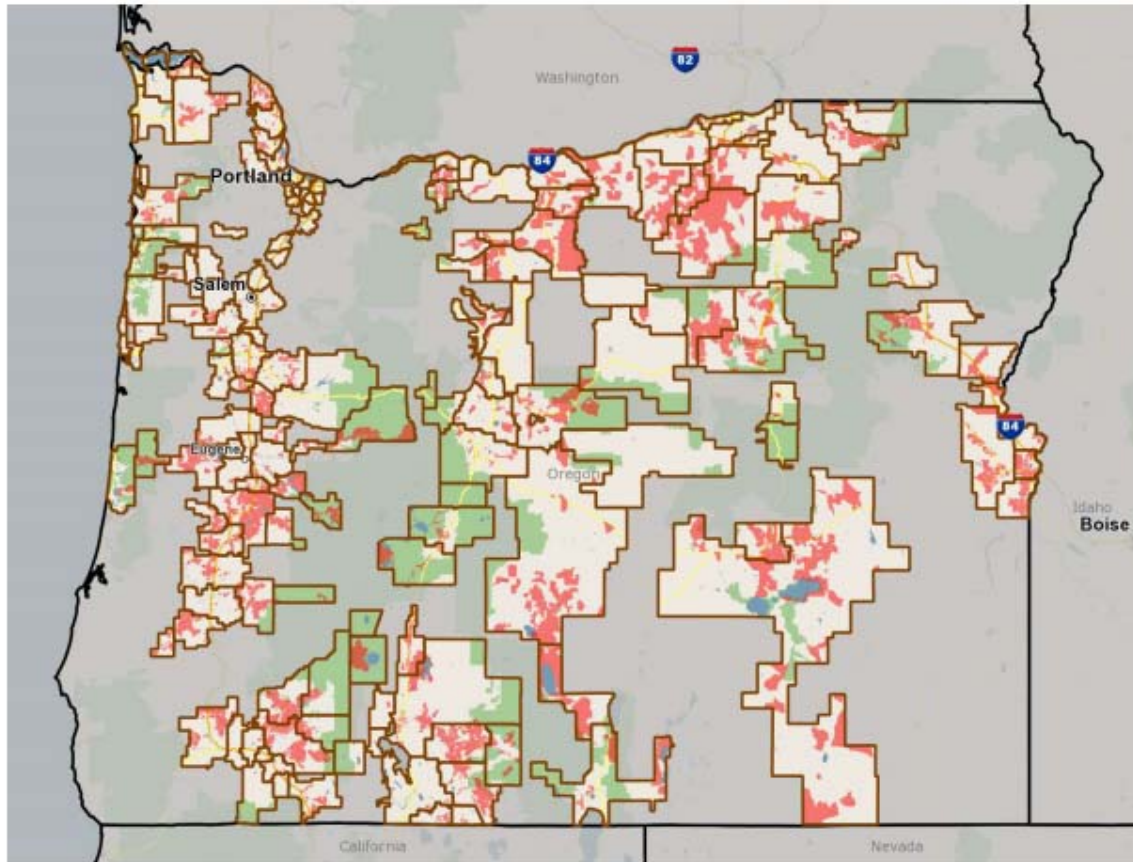
Oregon CAF2 Targeted Areas

"Rural Broadband deployment key learnings......
Low density, high cost rural areas by their very nature are expensive to upgrade and serve
- The primary cost of deployment is fiber optic placement – trenching / aerial
- CAF 2 has spurred a number of manufacturing advances in broadband equipment tailored for rural markets
- Alternative technologies for last mile connectivity are evolving and may be used in certain instances
- Terrain is still a major deployment challenge
- Deploying fiber optic cable deeper into rural America will provide the foundation for future broadband upgrades"

Downloaded 6/27/2020 from https://www.portlandoregon.gov/oct/article/746371

Can It Get Any Worse For Social and Health Inequity in OMMP?

YES. Frightening Tech Lobbyist Trends in Marijuana Tracking Systems

- Pushing 'Block Chain' Systems for Improved Security

- Pushing product adulterants to 'tag' legal marijuana

- Pushing these systems to other product lines (rec&medical cannabis, hemp, psilocybin)

- Using one state's acquisition to justify another state's purchase

- Setting requirements so general that it is nearly impossible to provide accountability or miss meeting requirement

- Engaging a cadre of "consultants" that offer $pecialized $upport to help use and who in turn endorse use

Tech Lobbyists Next Dream Product Marketed for Tracking:
Blockchain Software
Why This Approach Is Flawed

Cost, Energy & Climate Issues Amplify Social Inequities

What the Lobbyists Claim As Benefit:

1. Rapid, real-time traceability
2. Improved efficiency and reduced costs.
3. Product validation and standardization.

What the Lobbyists Won't Say:

1. Traceability can be broken
2. Very inefficient, very high upfront costs.
3. Unproven technology, counter to ISO traceability standards.

Blockchain requires fast and reliable internet access.
The mining activity to verify blockchain transactions also requires significant processing power. (Mlot 2015). (Digital) inequities are amplified that favor one societal group or location (Riddlesden and Singleton 2014).

Based on current and available data, the energy requirements of Blockchain transactions are significant. (King & Spaulding, 2019)

Cannabis Traceability and the Tech Lobbying Industry: Ensuring Bloatware for Tomorrow
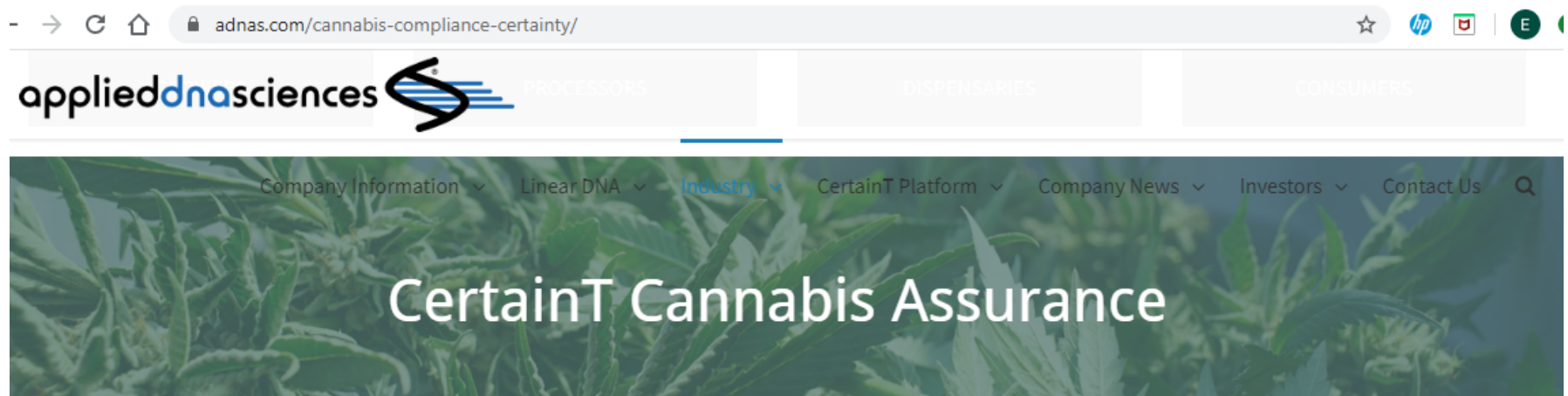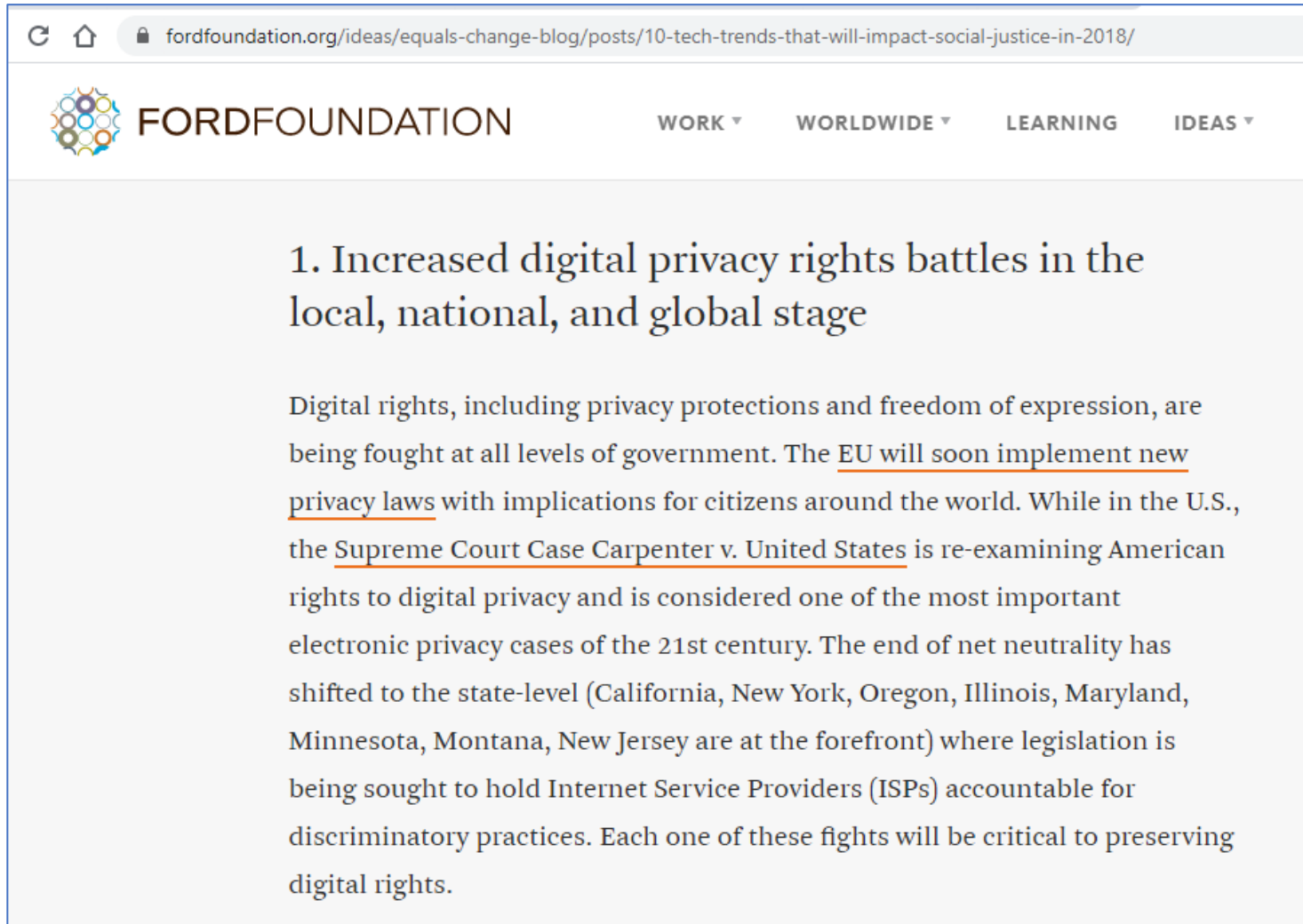
Adulterants added to cannabis to brand it legal.

Tech Sector (This is Cannabis Adulterant Company) Represents Most Amount Spent on Lobbying – Cannabis Is Lucrative Market Target

Avoid Temptation to Accept Tech Sales Pitch Without Studied Scrutiny
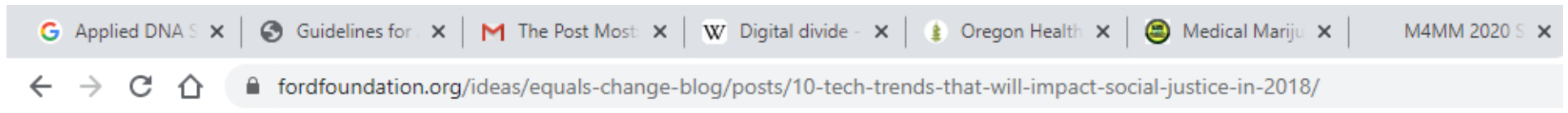## Review Collection and Use of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in OMMP

fordfoundation.org/ideas/equals-change-blog/posts/10-tech-trends-that-will-impact-social-justice-in-2018/

FORDFOUNDATION   WORK ▾   WORLDWIDE ▾   LEARNING   IDEAS ▾

1. Increased digital privacy rights battles in the local, national, and global stage

Digital rights, including privacy protections and freedom of expression, are being fought at all levels of government. The EU will soon implement new privacy laws with implications for citizens around the world. While in the U.S., the Supreme Court Case Carpenter v. United States is re-examining American rights to digital privacy and is considered one of the most important electronic privacy cases of the 21st century. The end of net neutrality has shifted to the state-level (California, New York, Oregon, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey are at the forefront) where legislation is being sought to hold Internet Service Providers (ISPs) accountable for discriminatory practices. Each one of these fights will be critical to preserving digital rights.

OMMP tech requirements and acquisitions must be accountable and transparent.

5. Greater transparency and accountability of government procurement of private sector technologies

Governments around the world are increasingly purchasing and relying on private sector tech-enabled and data-driven technologies. These technologies are being used for everything from welfare and benefits delivery to policing and sentencing and immigration and border enforcement. While these