

MOTION

Vancouver City Council, at its meeting on December 14, 2010, referred this matter to the Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets meeting on December 16, 2010, in order to hear from speakers.

6. Affordable Internet Access in Vancouver - CRTC Usage Based Billing Decision

MOVED by: Councillor Reimer
SECONDED by: Councillor Louie

WHEREAS

1. The Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has, in Telecom Decision CRTC 2010-255, allowed incumbent Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to charge their customers, including wholesale customers (smaller independent ISPs), based on predetermined thresholds of bandwidth use;
2. This decision has allowed incumbent ISPs to impose unjust financial limitations on how many gigabytes of usage their independent competitors can provide to their customers, thereby severely limiting diversity in Canada's telecommunications sector;
3. This pricing regime will result in impediments to independent ISPs' abilities to financially differentiate the services they provide to consumers from the services of incumbents, which harms competition and market innovation;
4. Usage-based billing, or metering discriminates against certain forms of information, such as audio and video, insofar as it charges consumers more for content that requires the use of a large amount of gigabytes;
5. These high prices will act as a tax on innovation, free expression, and empowerment, as those who produce content become less able to produce and disseminate their work freely;
6. This pricing regime will increase the overall cost of Internet access for end-users, thereby deepening the digital divide, which is antithetical to the CRTC's broadband accessibility mandate;
7. Usage based billing limits Vancouver residents' ability to access online services, to become educated, and to communicate with others, and hampers the free and full exchange of information;
8. The City of Vancouver is increasingly moving towards web-based forms of communication, engagement and information sharing with its citizens.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Vancouver City Council call on the CRTC to reverse Telecom Decision CRTC 2010-255, and prevent incumbent ISPs from imposing usage-based billing on the independent ISPs that purchase wholesale broadband.