



Legislation Text

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Resolution to Pledge and Take Actions in Support of Net Neutrality

Over the past two decades, the City of Ann Arbor has increased greatly its use of the internet to the point where the ability to provide and access information, and to conduct business with the City online, has become a necessity for many residents and others. The City uses the internet to provide and receive information, for payments, to provide notices of City events and City actions, and for access to City services ranging from job applications to applications for permits.

The City has relied on the internet as an open medium with the understanding and assurance that internet service providers will deliver a resident's or other person's request for City content just as they would deliver such a request for any other content.

The Federal Communications Commission's recent repeal by its Restoring Internet Freedom Order of its prior Open Internet Order, or "net neutrality" order, violates that principle. The City is committed to not allowing internet service providers (ISPs) to be gatekeepers between our residents and City information and services on which they depend every day, and to providing information regarding ISPs that adhere to open internet principles.

A group of municipalities, through their mayors or board chair, pledged to use their authority, to the extent possible, to protect net neutrality. The group includes Bill de Blasio (New York City), Ted Wheeler (Portland, Oregon), Steve Adler (Austin), Mark Farrell (San Francisco), Jacob Frey (Minneapolis), Sly James (Kansas City, Missouri), Sam Liccardo (San José), Ron Nirenberg (San Antonio), Catherine Pugh (Baltimore), Barney Seney (Putnam, Connecticut), and Paul Soglin (Madison, Wisconsin), and Chair Zach Friend (Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors). At least 50 other municipalities have joined the pledge since it was initiated. A copy of the Cities Open Internet Pledge, available at www.MayorsForNetNeutrality.org <<http://www.MayorsForNetNeutrality.org>> (last visited April 19, 2018), is attached.

Sponsored by: Mayor Taylor

Whereas, City Council wishes to commit the City to take all available steps to ensure the internet remains open and to keep internet service providers (ISPs) from acting as gatekeepers to throttle, block or limit access to or receipt of City government content on the internet;

Whereas, The City wishes to join with other cities and their mayors who have made similar commitments;

RESOLVED, To the extent permitted by law and to the extent within the City's control, City shall:

1. Procure applicable internet services from companies that do not block, throttle, or provide paid prioritization of content on City sites used to provide critical services and information to City residents and others;
2. Ensure an open internet connection if and when the City offers any free or subsidized

service to City residents and/or other persons;

3. Not block, throttle or engage in paid prioritization if and when the City provides internet service directly to City residents, businesses located within the City, and/or others, such as service through free public Wi-Fi or municipal broadband;

4. To the extent permitted, require internet service providers within the City to provide clear and accessible notices of filtering, blocking and prioritization policies with enforceable penalties for violations to protect consumers from deceptive practices;

5. Monitor the practices of ISPs within the City so consumers and regulators can know when a company is or is not abiding by open internet principles; and

6. Make available information as to which ISPs that provide service within the City, including municipal options, abide by open internet policies.

RESOLVED, That the Mayor be authorized to join with other municipalities and sign the Cities Open Internet Pledge at www.MayorsForNetNeutrality.org <<http://www.MayorsForNetNeutrality.org>>; and

RESOVLED, That the City Administrator be authorized to take the administrative actions necessary to implement this resolution.