

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 18-0074R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: President Young, Councilmembers Henry, Scott, Costello, Burnett, Bullock,
Pinkett, Dorsey, Cohen, Middletown, Stokes, Sneed, Clarke, Reisinger

Introduced and read first time: March 26, 2018

Assigned to: Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Mayor's Office of Information Technology, Enoch
Pratt Free Library, Baltimore City Public School System, Municipal Telephone Exchange,
Department of Finance

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing – Impact of Net Neutrality Repeal on City Operations**

3 FOR the purpose of calling on representatives from the Mayor's Office of Information
4 Technology, the Department of Finance, the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore City Public
5 Schools, and the Municipal Telephone Exchange to appear before the City Council to discuss
6 the potential impact of net neutrality repeal on their technology plans and the City's costs, as
7 well as what steps can be taken to mitigate the risks posed by net neutrality repeal.

8 **Recitals**

9 Net neutrality, the principle that internet service providers (ISPs) should enable access to all
10 content and applications regardless of the source, and without favoring or blocking particular
11 products or websites, will officially cease being required by law on April 23, 2018. The current
12 administration's rollback of Obama era protections for this bedrock internet principle is widely
13 expected to have far-reaching consequences for internet development, innovation, and
14 affordability going forward.

15 Without net neutrality requirements, ISPs, many of which enjoy effective monopolies in
16 portions of the country, will be able to favor in-house content, require additional payments to
17 access certain sites or types of services, or steer low-income and cost-conscious customers
18 toward 'internet-lite' packages that offer access to only a limited number of sites favored by the
19 ISP.

20 The relative lack of competition in the Baltimore ISP market could make us particularly
21 vulnerable to abuses of providers' newfound power to charge consumers or content generators
22 extra for the connectivity that they expect. In addition to the problems this could cause for all
23 Baltimoreans, City government itself could be particularly challenged by departures from net
24 neutrality principles.

25 The City needs to be aware of, and prepared for, the possibility that internet costs could rise,
26 libraries and schools could be forced to choose between affordability and universal access for
27 their patrons, services such as Voice over Internet Phones could become unstable or more
28 expensive, and the City could be asked to pay ISPs to ensure that citizens can easily access

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

Council Bill 18-0074R

1 municipal government websites. These concerns need to be considered and addressed as the
2 City makes budgetary decisions and strategic plans about how to deploy technology.

3 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
4 Council calls on representatives from the Mayor's Office of Information Technology, the
5 Department of Finance, the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore City Public Schools, and the
6 Municipal Telephone Exchange to appear before it to discuss the potential impact of net
7 neutrality repeal on their technology plans and the City's costs, as well as what steps can be
8 taken to mitigate the risks posed by net neutrality repeal.

9 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
10 Director of Finance, the Comptroller, the Chief Information Officer, the President and Chief
11 Executive Officer of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, the Chief Executive Officer of Baltimore City
12 Public Schools, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.