



Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Cole

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
Deployment of FIOS Services in Baltimore City through the Verizon Maryland Network

FOR the purpose of requesting the Mayor's Office of Cable and Communications, the Chair of the Cable Communications Advisory Commission, and representatives of Verizon to come before the Council to discuss deployment of the newest high speed internet and television technology in Baltimore.

Recitals

The Verizon FIOS network serves 2.5 million internet and 1.9 million television customers. Cities with FIOS services include: Annapolis, Maryland; Columbia, Maryland; Jersey City, New Jersey; Trenton, New Jersey; Newport News, Virginia; and Richmond, Virginia.

The installation of the FIOS network has continuously had a positive effect on local economies. In March of 2006, Verizon added 600 new full time employment positions in Virginia, and 8,200 new fiber related jobs were created nationally, amounting to nearly \$400 million in wages and salaries and an additional \$1.2 billion in "total" economic activity.

Building new networks, upgrading infrastructure, and connecting customers to high speed internet creates employment opportunities in a growing telecommunications business. Equally important is the access to superior networks that allow for business success and the transmission of knowledge.

Millions of Americans are affected adversely by the digital divide. Most prominent communities to be adversely affected are rural and low income urban areas. More than 62% of households with incomes over \$100,000 subscribe to broadband at home while just 11% of households with incomes below \$30,000 subscribe.

In February 2009, Philadelphia's City Council unanimously approved a 15-year franchise agreement with Verizon Communications, Inc., which will bring the FIOS network into that city. Verizon offered assurances on minority hiring and committed itself to put its fiber-optic network evenly across the city over a 7-year period. Verizon has made a written commitment to add 100 jobs to its city workforce and to increase its minority-contracting percentage from 14% now to 30% by the final year of the contract. Verizon's investment in this project is estimated to be

between \$800 million and \$1 billion. Mayor Nutter of Philadelphia has said that he will sign the legislation.

The government of Washington, D.C. has also been in negotiations with Verizon to work out an agreement that will also bring the FIOS network into that city.

To join with our neighbor cities to the north and the south, Baltimore needs to begin the process of negotiation with the Verizon Maryland network, so that our citizens can also have access to the newest high speed internet and television technology.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the Mayor's Office of Cable and Communications, the Chair of the Cable Communications Advisory Commission, and representatives of Verizon are requested to come before the Council to discuss deployment of the newest high speed internet and television technology in Baltimore.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor's Office of Cable and Communications, the Chair of the Cable Communications Advisory Commission, representatives of Verizon, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison the City Council.

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