

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 070756)

RESOLUTION

Authorizing City Council's Committee on Technology and Information Services to hold hearings to evaluate the status of Wireless Philadelphia and its progress toward bridging Philadelphia's Digital Divide, and in furtherance of such evaluation authorizing the issuance of subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents to the full extent authorized under Section 2-401 of the Home Rule Charter.

WHEREAS, Internet access is critical for improved educational, employment, health, and life opportunities for residents of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Over half of an estimated 600,000 Philadelphia households do not have internet access; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia Wireless, in partnership with internet provider, EarthLink, and the City of Philadelphia, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization committed to making high speed Internet access more available and affordable to those currently without internet access; and

WHEREAS, Earthlink has disbanded its municipal wireless business unit terminating 900 employees and withdrawn from municipal wireless projects in Houston and San Francisco, but committing to complete the project in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, WiFi Philadelphia has distributed about 300 wireless bundles to the economically disadvantaged by the end of June while the object was to distribute 1,000 such bundles in that time frame; and

WHEREAS, As the costs of competing private sector wireless service declines, WiFi Philadelphia may attract fewer market rate subscribers; and

WHEREAS, It is still unclear what the true costs of municipal wireless service is in terms of the City being the anchor tenant of the system; and

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WHEREAS, It is important to understand the consequences for the City of a failed municipal wireless system, if Earthlink pulls out of the WiFi Philadelphia venture; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That City Council's Committee on Technology and Information Services is hereby authorized to hold hearings to evaluate the status of Wireless Philadelphia and it's progress toward bridging Philadelphia's Digital Divide, and in furtherance of such evaluation the Committee is authorized to issue subpoenas as the chairperson deems necessary or appropriate to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents to the full extent authorized under Section 2-401 of the Home Rule Charter.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the twentieth of September, 2007.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Rizzo

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Rizzo, Goode, Greenlee, Savage, Clarke, Council President Verna, Councilmembers Reynolds Brown, Tasco, Miller, Blackwell, Kenney, O'Neill, Campbell and Kelly