



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 32

Resolution condemning the inequitable contract between the City of New York and LinkNYC which will provide better Wi-Fi access to areas throughout the City where advertising is deemed more profitable, and calling for revenue sharing profits from this contract to be invested in efforts to increase Wi-Fi access in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island.

By Council Members Cabrera and Brannan

Whereas, Payphones are generally considered outdated as a result of mobile devices, and a large number of the City's 11,000 payphones are often broken; and

Whereas, In 1999, the City entered into a number of franchise contracts for installation and maintenance of public payphones which expired in October 2014; and

Whereas, On December 4, 2012, then Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, along with the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT) announced the Reinvent Payphones Design Challenge, a competition to modernize payphone infrastructure throughout the City; and

Whereas, On December 10, 2014, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced the approval of the City's LinkNYC proposal by the Franchise and Concession Review Committee to expand free, high-speed Internet access throughout the City; and

Whereas, LinkNYC is a public-private partnership between the Mayor's Office of Technology and Innovation, DoITT and CityBridge, a consortium whose members include Comark, Qualcomm, Control Group, Titan, Antenna and Transit Wireless; and

Whereas, As part of the proposal, LinkNYC will install approximately 10,000 digital kiosks, replacing the City's pay phones over the next 12 years providing New Yorkers with free Wi-Fi connections, free calls to anywhere in the United States, touchscreen displays with access to city services including 911 and 311, maps

and directions, free charging stations for mobile devices and digital displays for advertising; and

Whereas, In addition, residents and tourists will receive high-speed Internet service ranging from 100 megabits per second to one gigabit per second within 150 feet of the kiosks; and

Whereas, Although the project is expected to generate \$500 million for the City, some elected officials and city residents have expressed concerns that the project will disproportionately benefit Manhattan with the borough receiving more kiosks and better Wi-Fi service than low-income areas in the outer boroughs, which will receive fewer kiosks and slower connection speeds; and

Whereas, In order to partially recompense low-income communities which will receive fewer kiosks and relatively low bandwidth access in accordance with the contract's terms, revenue sharing profits from this contract should be invested in efforts to increase Wi-Fi access in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York condemns the inequitable contract between the City of New York and LinkNYC which will provide better Wi-Fi access to areas throughout the City where advertising is deemed more profitable, and calling for revenue sharing profits from this contract to be invested in efforts to increase Wi-Fi access in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island.

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