

## Campaign Spotlight: Internet for All

Access to the internet has become a necessity, and the high cost of service affects access to opportunities in the job market, in school, and in many other aspects of daily life. ACORN's Internet for All campaign demands \$10/month high speed internet for low income families.

### Key Message

- Access to reliable high-speed internet has become increasingly important for participation in many facets of life, from job searching to homework. ACORN believes access to internet at home is essential and a right.
  - **It's about equality:** To succeed in the digital economy, we need to have a home connection to the internet. People today need it to look and apply for work, students need it to do homework and to access information. Spending hours at a library or coffee shop puts low-income people at a disadvantage.
  - **It's about security:** Internet at home is about immediate access to services that keep us safe and healthy. We need it to access government programs, and in emergencies to find doctors or other health care providers. Having access to internet at home brings peace of mind, helping us lead secure and healthy lives.
  - **It's about expression:** Email, news, social media — the internet is one of the most important tools used to express ourselves, to keep us connected to each other, and to keep us up to date with what is going on in the world today. It's how we speak our minds, stay informed, and keep in touch with the people we love.
- Canada has some of the highest internet costs in the world and lags behind many other countries with internet speeds. Accessing the internet is a hardship for many Canadians.
- It's time for big telecom to stop gouging low-income Canadians! The federal government and the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) needs to close the digital divide by ensuring low-income families have access to affordable high-speed internet.
- In the recent budget, the Federal Government pledged \$13.2million for affordable access. However, this money is a corporate subsidy, going directly to the big telecoms companies, like Rogers and Bell, in the form of a voluntary program. Now the CRTC has passed the buck to the Ministry of Innovation to make Internet affordable and we need to guarantee that low income Canadians' voices are heard!
- ACORN members need your support to make internet affordable for all Canadians living under the Low Income Measure.

## Key Facts

- In 2014, the telecommunications industry in Canada generated \$45.9 billion in revenue—an increase of 2.4% from 2013.<sup>1</sup>
- 42% of Canadian households in the lowest income quartile of \$30,000 or less do not have home internet access, compared to 2% in the highest income quartile.<sup>2</sup>
- In December 2016, the CRTC ruled that high-speed internet is a “basic service” for all Canadians.<sup>3</sup> This means that all Canadians must have access to reliable, world-class mobile and residential Internet services, no matter where they live.
- While the CRTC decision was a step in the right direction, it didn’t go far enough – the announcement did not respond to ACORN’s call for a subsidy for urban low income people.<sup>4</sup>

## Key Demands

- Decision-makers at the CRTC and in the federal government must address barriers of access to home internet, including affordability.
- ACORN is now calling on the federal government to offer a subsidy to low-income people and families so that they can access high speed internet.
- ACORN’s Internet for All campaign demands \$10/month high speed internet for low income families.

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<sup>1</sup> Communications Monitoring Report 2015: Telecommunications sector overview (CRTC).

<http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/publications/reports/policymonitoring/2015/cmr5.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Low Income in Canada: a Multi-line and Multi-index Perspective (StatsCan).

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75f0002m/75f0002m2012001-eng.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> In historic decision, Canada joins small handful of nations that define high-speed Internet as a basic service (OpenMedia).

<https://openmedia.org/en/press/historic-decision-canada-joins-small-handful-nations-define-high-speed-internet-basic>

<sup>4</sup> ACORN Members have mixed feelings about the CRTC announcement today (ACORN).

[http://www.internetforall.ca/acorn\\_members\\_have\\_mixed\\_feelings\\_about\\_the\\_crtc\\_announcement\\_today](http://www.internetforall.ca/acorn_members_have_mixed_feelings_about_the_crtc_announcement_today)

## The “Ask”

*Note: This is what you’re asking people to do!*

1. Sign the Internet for All petition asking Minister of Innovation, Navdeep Bains, to meet with us to make sure low-income Canadians have a seat at the table to ensure the Internet is affordable and accessible for everyone [here](#).
2. Join ACORN by signing up as a Member [here](#).

**All finished? Return to our Campaigns page by [clicking here](#).**

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## Sources

See ACORN’s full Internet for All report here:

<https://www.acorncanada.org/internet-all-internet-use-and-accessibility-low-income-canadians>

Communications Monitoring Report 2015: Telecommunications sector overview (CRTC).

<http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/publications/reports/policymonitoring/2015/cmr5.htm>

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ACORN Members Disappointed - Federal Budget - Low Income Internet Support for Corporate Innovation & Nothing for Actual Low Income People! (ACORN)

<http://www.acorncanada.org/acorn-members-disappointed-federal-budget-low-income-internet-support-corporate-innovation-nothing>