

CRTC Announcement

Yesterday the CRTC announced their decision regarding the “Review of basic telecommunications” proceeding. The CRTC has been hearing from Canadians for over a year. So we applaud this decision as a major step forward in our campaign to ensure that all seniors have access to the internet which is also affordable. We joined the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, COSCO, ACORN and CAC to form the affordable Access Coalition. At our annual convention this year we discussed and adopted resolutions to address this issue, we had John Lawford - Executive Director and General Counsel at PIAC as a speaker at our convention and NPF, PIAC and ACORN presented at a CRTC hearing to raise the issues of access and affordability.

As part of the Affordable Access Coalition the National Pensioners Federation applauds the CRTC on their announcement to establish “a universal service objective that Canadians – in rural and remote areas as well as in urban centres – should have access to voice services and broadband Internet access services on fixed and mobile wireless networks.” They acknowledged the need for all Canadians to have access to unlimited internet plans, and declared that 50 Mbps download and 10 Mbps upload is a “basic” telecommunications service which all Canadians should be able to access, and that this should be universally accessible by 90 percent of Canadians by 2021, and the remaining 10 percent within ten to fifteen years.

The CRTC also made recommendations to the Government of Canada regarding telecommunications affordability, recognizing the compelling evidence it heard from many low-income Canadians.

Although we had proposed a funding mechanism for low income Canadians the CRTC felt it appropriate that the Federal Government and social service providers address the issue of affordability. Overall this is a major change of direction and recognition of the importance of internet access for all Canadians. Congratulations to our NPF membership for the success achieved through our participation in this Campaign.



Herb John - President.