



January 19, 2017

The Honourable Bill Morneau, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Finance
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
K1A 0A6

Re: Proposals for a levy or tax on Internet service providers in Canada

Dear Minister Morneau,

We are writing on behalf of OpenMedia, a community--based organization that works to keep the Internet open, affordable, and surveillance-free. We work toward informed and participatory digital policy by engaging hundreds of thousands of people in protecting our online rights. Most recently, OpenMedia led the nearly 50,000-strong citizen movement that saw the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission [mandate](#) access to mobile and fixed Internet as a basic service for all Canadians.

Since October, our organization has been actively campaigning on the [issue](#) of a potential tax or levy on Internet service providers (ISPs) under review by Canadian Heritage, as a means to fund Canadian Content. As you may have already seen, the issue is back in the press in the early weeks of 2017, with the [Toronto Star](#) and [CBC News](#) reporting on the topic, amongst other outlets.

To give you a sense of our community's perspectives on the issue, we would refer you to two pieces we published towards the end of last year on the issue in the [Financial Post](#) and VICE's Motherboard [publication](#) (written jointly with the Executive Director of the First Nations Technology Council), as well as our [submission](#) on the public record of Canadian Heritage's #DigiCanCon review.

As the Minister of Finance, we appreciate that you are very busy and receive many requests to meet with organizations like ours, but this particular issue of a tax on ISPs is of extreme concern to OpenMedia's large community (for many of the reasons outlined in our writing above). Professor Michael Geist has also written about this article [here](#) and [here](#), amongst many others.

While our organization is headquartered in Vancouver, we are writing to see if you are available to meet via telephone or videoconference to discuss your position on this issue? We recognize that the preliminary discussions of this issue are being held via Canadian Heritage's #DigiCanCon review, but this potential change to Canada's tax regime has direct financial implications for both your department and Canadian businesses and households from coast-to-coast-to-coast, which we would like to speak about with you directly.



Given that Canadian Heritage is expected to release their final report on the #DigiCanCon consultation results before the end of January, we would appreciate a meeting at your earliest convenience.

Please let me know if you are available for a meeting. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Josh Tabish
Campaigns Director, OpenMedia

Laura Tribe
Executive Director, OpenMedia

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