



Facsimile

Date: January 12, 2007

To: Len St-Aubin
Director General
Telecommunications Policy Branch
Industry Canada
16th Floor, 300 Slater Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0C8

Fax: 613-998-1256

From: Stephen Dempsey

Subject: Gazette Notice – Proposed Order to Vary Telecom Decision CRTC 2006-15

Pages: 3, *including this one*

We wish to have our submission of a matter of public record.

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December 13, 2006

Honourable Maxime Bernier
Minister of Industry
C.D. Howe Building
235 Queen Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0H5

COPY

Dear Minister Bernier:

On behalf of the Greater Halifax Partnership, I am writing to support our government's intention to consider changes to the framework for the forbearance from regulation of local telephone services, which was established by the CRTC in April of this year.

The Greater Halifax Partnership is one of North America's most dynamic and effective economic growth organizations. Our public-private partnership involves more than 130 private-sector companies, three levels of government, and a dedicated staff of skilled business professionals – all taking action to drive economic growth. Together, we have been setting the pace for accelerated growth since 1996.

As an organization, we are focused on the economic vitality of our region. Through our business retention and expansion initiative, SmartBusiness, we have met with over 1,000 CEOs in the Halifax Regional Municipality since June of 2004, representing 1/3 of the workforce. Time after time, these CEOs have underlined the importance of a vibrant information and telecommunications sector (ICT) to the growth and future prospects of their businesses.

A critical sector to the economy of the Halifax Regional Municipality and the Province of Nova Scotia is the information and telecommunications sector. It is our organization's view that these changes are not only beneficial to the telecommunications industry, but also for the consumer.

At the Partnership, we believe this is good news for consumers and businesses, for competition and for the extensive and comprehensive public consultation process that preceded it. In addition to confirming the direction set out in the report of the expert TPR Panel, we also believe that your proposed framework represents a fundamental change in telecom policy that is aligned with market realities. Your proposal will remove restraints on competition, freeing all telecom providers to deliver greater value of choice for customers.



We are very pleased to see the federal government move to further deregulate the telecommunications industry by eliminating major market restrictions on local market phone services. This announcement offers opportunities for investment and growth, greater consumer choice and open competition in the telecommunications market. A vibrant ICT sector in Atlantic Canada is critical to our region's attraction and retention of new businesses and to the global competitiveness of our existing Nova Scotia companies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Dempsey", is written over the word "Sincerely,".

Stephen Dempsey
President and CEO