

From the desk of Rouzbeh



Dr. Rouzbeh Yassini

“Large, sophisticated cities are still lagging behind in terms of broadband penetration.”

Hello,

I am of two minds on broadband as we pass the mid-point of 2016. On the one hand, I am greatly pleased with the federal courts upholding the view that broadband is a needed utility. But on the other hand, I was somewhat disappointed in the finding of a recent study showing that 2.2 billion people around the world, who live in urban areas, lack adequate broadband service*.

All Bits are Sacred

The decision by the US Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit was in a case brought against the FCC questioning its rules that prohibit broadband companies from delaying or in any way hindering the deliver speeds of Internet content. The court in a 2-1 ruling upheld the FCC contention that broadband is as essential a service as phone and electricity and should be available to all **AMERICANS**.

Those FCC rules, created by the Federal Communications Commission in early 2015, were contested by cable, telecom and wireless Internet providers. But millions of consumers and giant tech firms supported the rules.

Urban Areas Also Lag

Rules such as net neutrality are important because, it appears, the broadband access issue is not limited to only rural or elderly classes of citizenry. A recent **REPORT** prepared for the Wireless Broadband Alliance focused on the broadband unconnected population in 18 large cities as well as each of their related international regions.

The conclusions are that 57% of the world's urban population remains unconnected, either with fixed or mobile broadband, representing about 2.2 billion people globally. Further, it found that there are wide variances in broadband access when comparing metro areas, meaning that a segment of the population inside large cities is being left out of the digital age. That could be due to several factors, including affordability and availability of the broadband services in their neighborhood.

And, the study further noted that large, sophisticated cities are still lagging behind in terms of broadband penetration. For instance, more than 25% of the populations in Los Angeles, New York, and Shanghai remain unconnected. Finally, the study determined that urban citizens are still unconnected either because they cannot afford the broadband service or the device.

With hope and continued passion,

Rouzbeh

Other entities, including the UN Broadband **COMMISSION, have placed this number at 4 billion.*