



Briefing Note 3: Bill C-81 – *Accessible Canada Act*

Accessibility Plans

How does Bill C-81 currently address this issue?

Bill C-81 requires the Government of Canada and federally-regulated organizations to establish accessibility plans. However, the Bill does not require these to be good plans and it does not require an organization to implement its accessibility plan. The Bill does not provide people with disabilities a way to lodge complaints against an organization if it makes no plan or does not implement its plan.

Why is this concerning?

It is important that government and organizations establish accessibility plans. These plans can be very helpful tools for identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility. However, if there is no requirement to create or implement good plans, then there is no assurance that plans will be effective. There is a real risk that accessibility plans will be weak documents that ignore major barriers and do little to make government and organizations more accessible.

How should Bill C-81 be changed?

- It must require accessibility plans to ensure that the organization will be accessible within the same timeline set for Canada (Refer to Briefing Note 1 for more information).
- It must require accessibility plans to set out what barriers the organization has identified; what steps the organization has and will take to become accessible; a year by year breakdown of these steps; who in the organization is responsible for implementing these steps; and what strategies it will use to prevent new barriers.
- It must require accessibility plans to provide details about how they address the principles of Bill C-81.
- It must allow members of the public to file a complaint with the Accessibility Commissioner if government or an organization fails to make or implement an accessibility plan that meets the above requirements.