

# Using Public Policy-Oriented Consumer Interest Research (PPOCIR) in Regulatory Proceedings to Advance the Consumer Interest



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# PIAC Case Study

- Paying a fee to receive a paper bill (Pay to Pay)

**Your Current Bill**

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**Account charges & credits**

Oct 22	Paper Invoice Fee		2.00
		Total before taxes:	\$2.00
		HST	0.26
		<b>Total account charges &amp; credits:</b>	<b>\$2.26</b>

Ⓢ

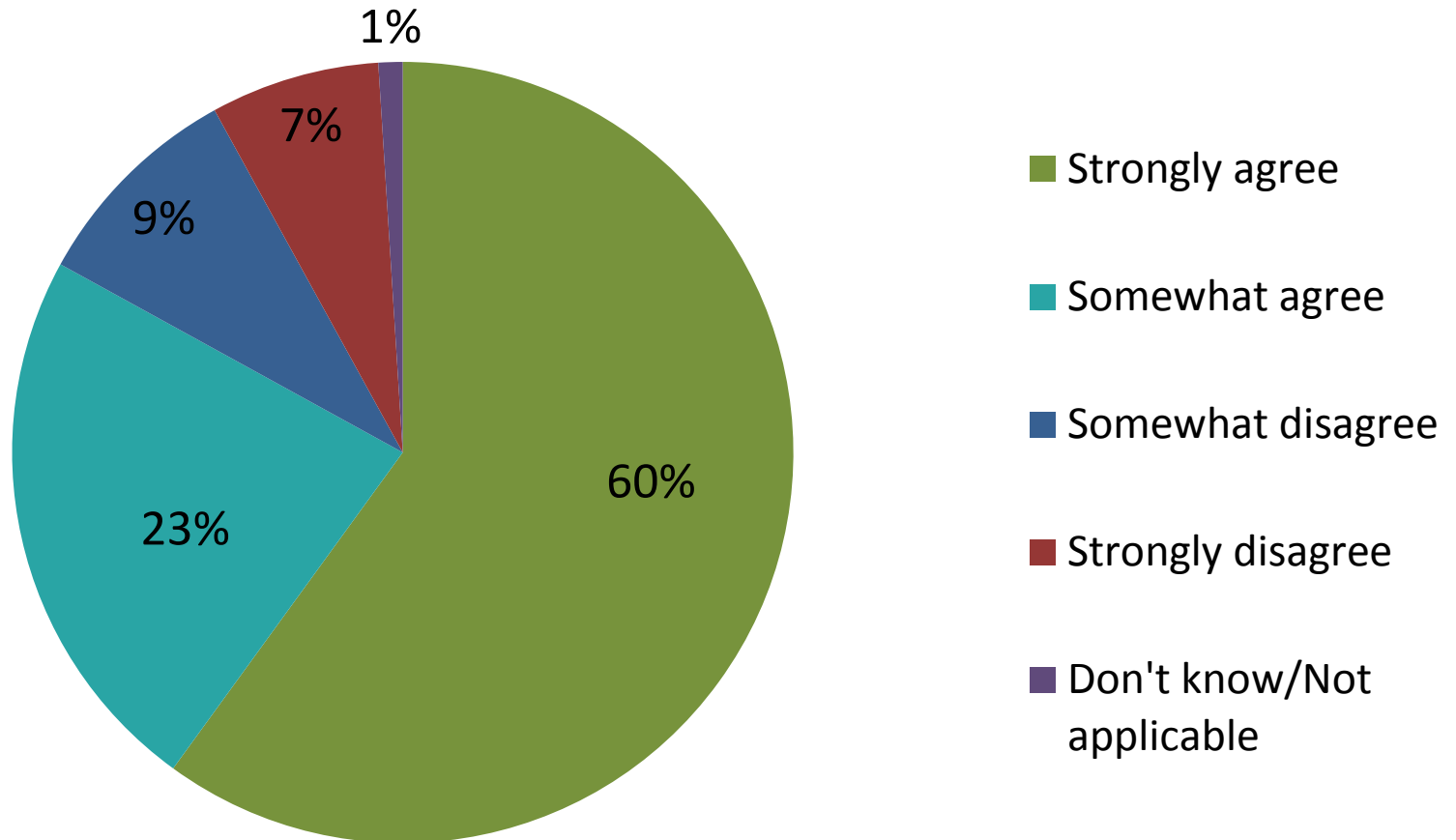
# Pay to Pay Billing Event Timeline

- 2010 – companies begin charging consumers for a monthly bill or statement
- April 2012 – CRTC begins requesting information on billing practices from companies under its purview
- Summer/Fall 2012 – Critics such as CARP raise awareness of the issue
- November 2012 – PIAC proposes research on the issue to the Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA)

# Pay to Pay Timeline (Cont'd)

- April 2013 - Office of Consumer Affairs awards research funding to PIAC
- July 2013 – CRTC issues letter to 61 organizations requesting detailed information regarding paper billing practices
- October 2013 – PIAC submits Part I application to the CRTC to formally examine paper billing practices, using primary data generated by OCA research project

**Some people say people should have the right to get a paper bill in the mail from a company without having to pay an extra fee and that this is part of the company's cost of doing business? Do you...?**



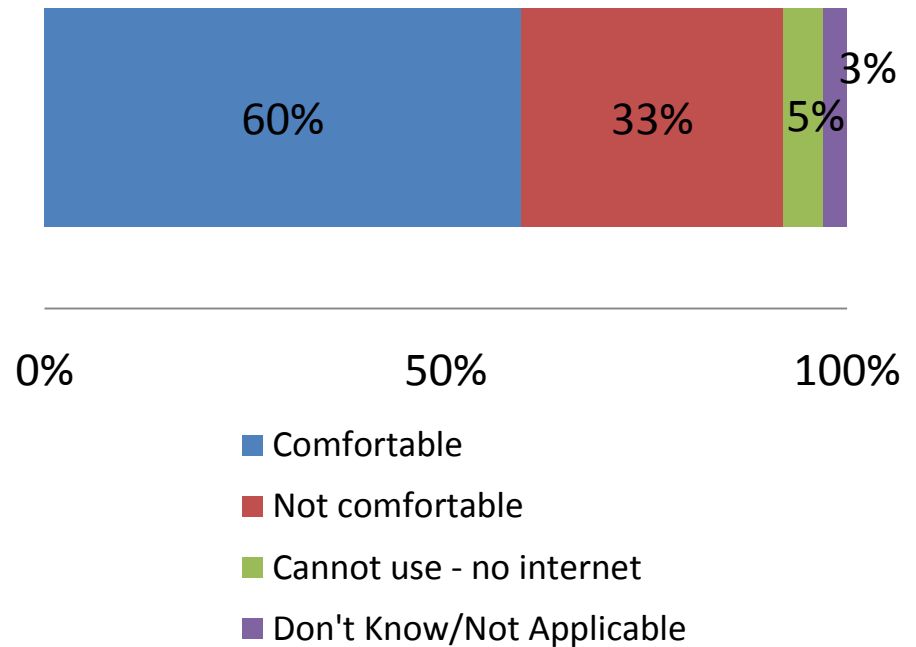
Source: PIAC and Environics Research Group, *Pay for Paper Bills Study*, 2013. n = 2205; Q11

## How do you feel personally about receiving bills or invoices online? Are you very, somewhat, not very or not at all comfortable with this?

Response	%
Very Comfortable	36%
Somewhat Comfortable	24%
Not Very Comfortable	13%
Not at all Comfortable	20%
Cannot use – no internet connection	5%
Don't know/Not Applicable	3%

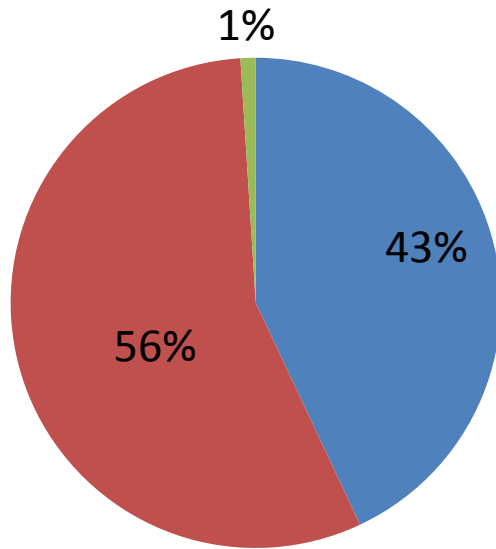
Comfortable

Not Comfortable



Source: PIAC and Environics Research Group, *Pay for Paper Bills Study*, 2013. n = 1662, Those who receive and pay any of the bills that come to their household on a regular basis; Q2

**Some companies charge their customers an extra fee to get their bills and statements on paper by mail, as opposed to getting them online electronically. Have you personally ever been notified you were being charged such a fee?**



■ Yes ■ No, have not ■ Don't know/Not Applicable

Source: PIAC and Environics Research Group, *Pay for Paper Bills Study*, 2013. n = 2005; Q7

**Have you personally ever paid this extra fee to receive a paper bill?**

Response	%
Yes	54%
No, have not	44%
Don't know/Not applicable	1%

Source: PIAC and Environics Research Group, *Pay for Paper Bills Study*, 2013. n = 862, Those who have been notified of paper fees; Q8

## Estimated Annual Cost to Receive Paper Bills for 1 in 10 or 3 in 10 Canadian Consumers with Internet Access, Canadians Without Internet Access and Canadians Not using Computers

<u>Type of Service</u>	<u>Estimated Annual Cost</u> if 1 in 10 Canadians with Internet Receive Paper Bills	<u>Estimated Annual Cost</u> if 3 in 10 Canadians with Internet Receive Paper Bills
Banking	\$78 Million	\$180 Million
Communication Services (Phone, T.V., Wireless)	\$137 – 234 Million	\$315 - 554 Million
<b>Total Annual Cost</b>	<b>\$215 – 312 Million</b>	<b>\$495 – 734 Million</b>



# Pay to Pay Billing – Summer 2014

- July 2014 – CRTC dismisses PIAC's application, proposes alternative approach to meet with providers
- August 27, 2014 – PIAC releases *How to Pay the Piper: A Primer on Additional Charges to Consumers in Canada for Paper Billing*
- August 28, 2014 - CRTC meets with communication service providers
- August 29, 2014 - Minister of Industry commits to eliminating pay to pay billing through legislation.