

June 26, 2017

The Honorable Cecilia Aguilar-Curry, Chair  
Assembly Local Gov't Commission  
Room 157, 1020 N Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 649 (Hueso) – Small Cell Wireless Facilities - -OPPOSE

Dear Chair Aguilar-Curry:

Environmental Working Group (EWG) opposes SB 649 by Senator Hueso. This bill would make the installation of small cell wireless facilities, such as those used to facilitate 5G networks, ministerial rather than discretionary at the local government level.

The health impacts of cellular transmissions have been debated more and more passionately the last ten years because there are studies that raise real concerns about the effects of radio frequency (RF) energy or radiation on humans. This is why EWG sponsored two bills by former Senator Leno (SB 1212 in 2010 and SB 932 in 2011) that would have required sellers of cell phones to inform consumers that minimizing exposure to cell phone radiation is prudent and in fact recommended by cell phone manufacturers in their included manuals.

Studies on the health impacts of cell phones and their transmission infrastructure are continuing. As new information becomes available, local government ought to be able to use it to help guide their decision-making, including locational issues such as proximity to homes, school, and hospitals. EWG believes that allowing cities and counties to weigh the potential impacts of transmission networks before permits are issued for their construction is essential and SB 649 would prevent them from doing so. And, if more definitive health concerns arise, state law would have to be changed in order to give local governments the flexibility to do their due diligence.

For these reasons, we must oppose SB 649 and urge a “no” vote in the Local Government Committee.

Sincerely,



Bill Allayaud  
California Director of Government Affairs  
Environmental Working Group

cc: Senator Hueso