

WIRELESS RADIATION EDUCATION & DEFENSE



WiRED

510-528-9428

WiREDefense@gmail.com

Esteemed members of the Senate Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities & Communications:

Please note that we strongly oppose SB 556 for many reasons. Local governments must retain as much control as possible over wireless telecom infrastructure **Local officials know best where to safely and more esthetically locate telecom equipment.** Hideous 4G/5G antennas and related equipment are too often “colocated” with other antennas/equipment, causing electrical overload. **They can thus burst into flames**, which is the last thing our state needs!

- In June 2020, a cell tower went up in flames as a result of electrical/mechanical issues in Hannover. It spread to the forest. Brief, dramatic footage: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U12LWMNH3UI>
- In 2018, the Woolsey Fire started as a result of utility equipment failure. The fire is currently under criminal investigation, with over 400 homes in Malibu burned and a cost of over \$6 billion and three deaths.
- In 2007 the Malibu Canyon Fire started as the result of three telecoms overloading a Southern California Edison utility pole. The fire burned 1500 homes and over 900,000 acres.

Did you know that there is a Firefighters’ exemption in AB 537, as there was in SB 649? Do you know why? Firefighters fought for it because a cell antennas on firehouses disabled them mentally so severely that they were getting lost in their own hometown. Think about it. Firefighters are among the strongest, most physically fit in the population. Please consider what an antenna might do to your grandparents or your baby if installed outside their bedroom window or school, emitting non-ionizing radiation /24/7/365. Over **1,000 peer-reviewed scientific studies** prove deleterious effects: <https://ehtrust.org/science/>.

In addition to these very serious objections, we are alarmed that the 5G roll out will significantly **lower property values and harm nearby businesses**, as has already proven to be the case near cell antennas.

We want you to **preserve our right to privacy** rather than allowing us all to be subjected to privacy invasions by corporations or criminals who can easily hack into insecure wireless connections. Wired connections will always be more private, more secure, more reliable, safer, and even faster than wireless.

There ARE superior alternatives! Whether copper wirelines or fiber optics, wired connections are the answer to safely and affordably closing the digital divide. Chattanooga TN and other municipalities that offer municipal broadband via fiber optics have experienced economic boons. California towns and cities are in dire straits economically due to the Covid 19 crisis. Please vote down this bad bill and, instead, **encourage the option of municipal wired broadband.**

Our taxes already financed the fiber infrastructure nationwide, as well as for fiber into the premises, but the telecom industry is trying to maximum profit for that last leap from the street into the premises. Though it was decided that the “Irregulators,” who sued over this bait and switch, did not have standing, the lawsuit determined that states and cities do have standing to sue to recover the billions lost to industry via that heist.

5G equipment will block **disability access** in our Public Rights of Way and in affected public buildings, which is morally and legally unacceptable and will prompt lawsuits. SB 556 violates the ADA.

The bill is unnecessary because countless local governments have already negotiated contracts in good faith with wireless companies to allow use of locally owned poles in the public streets on what the industry views as reasonable terms, and local governments already comply with the 2018 FCC Small Cell Order.

SB 649 did not become law, though many busy legislators voted for it without knowing that it was written by industry lobbyists with ALEC (the corporate-beholden American Legislative Exchange Council.) There are strong indications that SB 556 was also **written by ALEC.**

Furthermore, we have heard from many people who are on dial-up and are thus unable to submit comments via this Portal. Because the Portal is optimized for faster connections, you are effectively excluding much of the public from participation, particularly people in rural areas and people with electrosensitivity who, due to EHS disability, cannot use wireless connections.

We trust that you represent your constituents and the people of this state, rather than representing an industry which pretends to have moral standards, e.g. closing the digital divide, but actually disregards the public’s true interest. We are happy to answer your questions and provide information, peer-reviewed studies, etc. We would be greatly relieved to hear from you that you will vote no on SB 556 and any other SB 649 replacement measures.

In closing, we reiterate the League of California Cities in asserting that the state must not further limit local control. The state of California would be foolish to limit wise and innovative options such as kickstarting economic recovery via wired municipal broadband.

Sincerely,

WiRED Co-founders Phoebe Sorgen and Stephanie Thomas, EHS Liaison Soula Culver
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