**The Telecoms Con: Bills to Bridge ‘Digital Divide’ Come at High Cost**

Despite outspoken opposition to an unsafe 5G infrastructure, two telecom- friendly bills are flying through our state legislature. SB 556 and AB 537 shift decision-making power concerning where “small” cell antennas will be located in our communities from local authority to the telecom industry. One day soon you will wake up to find a wireless antenna outside your child’s bedroom window.

SB 556 and AB 537 facilitate a statewide 5G roll-out that requires a dense network of powerful antennas placed every few homes, near schools, in parks and in fake mailboxes. These antennas emit radio-frequency radiation 24/7, exposing everyone whether they use it or not.

There has been NO pre-market safety testing on 5G, but we have science proving that millimeter waves used for 5G penetrate the skin, eyes and testes. Isn’t that reason enough to keep it away from our children who, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, are most vulnerable?

We have an abundance of Independent studies proving biological harm from exposure to radiofrequency (RF) radiation, yet our legislators are ignoring that. The [$30 million study by the National Institutes of Health](https://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/whatwestudy/topics/cellphones/index.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) provides conclusive evidence that wireless radiation causes cancer. Dr. Beatrice Golomb, Professor of Medicine at UCSD issued a report on microwave sickness with over 300 citations. Why are California legislators listening to industry lobbyists who benefit financially from this instead of listening to scientific experts and their well-educated constituents who will suffer at the hands of telecom?

This legislative power grab by Big telecom was sold to policymakers as a solution for the “digital divide.” Hogwash. Telecom goes where the money is; in 2017 Gov. Brown vetoed a similar bill and telecom immediately went to the wealthiest communities in California installing 4G to convert later to 5G. Telecom has intentionally engaged in digital redlining and will continue to do so as there is nothing in the bills to truly close the divide.

A massive build-out of 5G “small” cells will significantly increase demand for power, resulting in greater greenhouse gas emissions and pollution.  These bills also put cities and counties at risk financially as telecom cannot obtain liability insurance. If there is a fire caused by their equipment, such as what occurred in Malibu in 2007, the city or county will be left paying for the damages.

The real purpose of these bills is not to help Californians. It’s to help telecoms compete with cable companies by selling wireless video subscriptions that deliver television without having to invest the money in laying cable to the home. The industry will reap billions by charging consumers to watch movies, play online games and surf the web and by mining and marketing consumer data from those activities.

The fastest, healthiest, most economical, most reliable and secure solution is wired broadband, or fiber-optic cable delivered directly to the home. American telephone customers have already paid for a national, fiber-optic network through additional fees on their monthly bills, but instead of using the funds to build that network, the telecoms diverted the money to build out their more profitable wireless small cell antenna network.

Telecom is using the tobacco playbook to spread disinformation and are willing to trample our rights and our lives to get what they want. The legislators in Sacramento who are supposed to protect us need to do just that – instead, thus far, they have caved to the deception and joined the stampede.