

Three Good Reasons to Vote NO on AB 537

1. This bill contradicts a 2020 9th Circuit Court decision and overrides federal FCC rules by mandating that local municipalities review and decide on small cell applications in just 60 days or else the antenna application will automatically be “deemed approved.”

- “Deemed approved” means the municipality must bear the significant financial burden of going to court to stop the telecom, rather than the telecom going to court to get approval.
- Towns and cities with part-time officials and urban cities with complex planning needs must meet statutory notice requirements for official meetings; they may be unable to meet these short shot clock deadlines.
- As a result, permits could be “deemed approved” before local officials even have time to discuss no less review them for completeness and safety.

2. This bill mandates that local authorities issue antenna permits even if required documents regarding traffic or safety are missing or incomplete.

- Safety is one of the primary concerns of local officials in approving or denying permits for telecommunications facilities.
- Unsafe antenna construction has previously resulted in property damage, personal injury and *devastating fires*.
- This extremely broad exemption is subject to wide interpretation, forcing municipalities to seek expensive court intervention. In contrast, FCC requires telecoms to seek court intervention.
- Co-locating multiple antennas on a single pole is a typical way for telecoms to save money but can be a serious safety issue.

3. Firefighters received an exemption in AB 537 based upon the science showing harmful health effects from wireless radiation exposure. Don’t our children, pregnant women, people with compromised immune systems, people with implanted medical devices and the elderly deserve the same protection?

- In previous legislation, California legislators recognized the need to protect the health of firefighters, some of whom have measurable brain abnormalities following years of exposure to cell towers near their stations.
- AB 537 is in effect admitting that the wireless transmitters that will be located in close proximity to homes and schools are likely dangerous.