

September 17, 2018

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, District of Columbia 20554

RE: Accelerating Wireline Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment, WC Docket No. 17-84; Accelerating Wireless Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment, WT Docket No. 17-79

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Wireless Infrastructure Now writes to express its strong support for the Federal Communications Commission's proposed Declaratory Ruling and Third Report and Order regarding state and local governance of small cell wireless infrastructure deployment. We ask you distribute this letter to each member of the Commission.

Wireless Infrastructure Now is a non-profit 501(c)6 dedicated to supporting efforts to improve wireless infrastructure. We are supported by public safety officials including police and fire chiefs, sheriffs; doctors, hospitals, social justice advocates, business and transportation leaders and those in the wireless industry.

Cellular wireless technology is the *new infrastructure* for the 21st Century. No different than water pipes, sewer pipes and electric infrastructure, cellular wireless communications are essential to everyday modern life. Just like electricity in the 19th century and interstate highways in the 20th century, wireless networks represent the next frontier of infrastructure investment needed to support a 21st century society.

From first responders to small business startups, consumers, transportation providers to journalists, custodians to CEOs, the need for reliable wireless is everywhere and the risks of not deploying critical infrastructure to support that need are real. Similar to a text not going through in a crowded stadium, imagine not being able to call 911 in an emergency, or a patient unable to inform doctors if something goes wrong. Imagine businesses grinding to a halt due to poor connectivity or network congestion.

Local governments have continued to create obstacles to deploying small cells. From onerous review processes to unreasonable attachment fees (some jurisdictions have demanded attachment fees in the public right of way exceeding \$7,000 per year), these obstacles prevent communities from keeping up with the growing demand for more capacity.

Existing wireless infrastructure needs a massive upgrade. Americans today use 35 times the amount of data they used in 2010, and by 2022 data demand is projected to increase five times over 2017 levels. Our network capacity is not keeping up and our communities require major upgrades to our wireless infrastructure to ensure we continue to enjoy the benefits of an interconnected world. A thriving wireless infrastructure network is not a luxury – it is necessary for numerous core functions we depend on every day. Network

enhancements are not just needed for 5G and new technologies – these upgrades are necessary to support current and future demand on existing cellular systems. As consumers continue to demand more wireless devices, stronger connections and higher download and upload speeds, industry needs help to stay ahead of data congestion. Without FCC intervention, wireless congestion will only worsen. Today's wireless infrastructure simply cannot handle tomorrow's needs. **The FCC's proposed new collocation shot clock category will help facilitate the buildout of a modern wireless infrastructure.** Cities typically taking months or in some cases years for to discuss and evaluate whether they will allow simple small cell attachments to existing verticality. Their continued delays in processing attachments impact the very constituents they are charged to serve.

- **The FCC's proposed definition of "effective prohibition" is important and strongly supported.** Robust wireless infrastructure requires unfettered access to the public right of way. Local governments have routinely delayed access to the public right of way with long processing times and exorbitant fees.
- **The FCC's proposed recurring fee structure is the only way to ensure a fair and equitable buildout of wireless infrastructure.** We strongly support the FCC's "fair and reasonable compensation" of approximately \$270 per small cell site. By demanding unreasonable attachment fees, many local governments are not helping to achieve the federal government's goal of ensuring affordable broadband access for every American, regardless of income level or address. Because many local governments see small cell infrastructure as a long-term revenue stream that can help with budgetary or fiscal problems, it is important the Commission regulate the rates they charge to ensure that fees are fair and equitable and that they support the federal government's goals.

We commend the FCC for moving forward with a new policy to remove barriers to wireless infrastructure investment. Local authorities have stymied the growth of small cell deployment and it is time the federal government step in to facilitate the needed rapid development.

We urge the Commission to support this declaratory ruling and report and order.

Respectfully submitted,



Kristen Byrne
Executive Director
Wireless Infrastructure Now