



**INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD
OF ELECTRICAL
WORKERS.**

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LONNIE R. STEPHENSON
International President

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International
Secretary-Treasurer

November 10, 2015

The Honorable Thomas Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) is a non-profit labor organization that provides collective bargaining representation and other membership services on behalf of its 750,000 active and retired members. The IBEW represents a number of individuals employed in various industries who come into contact with radio frequency (RF) hazards on a regular basis. I write to urge you to promulgate a rule that would require stronger RF monitoring and safety regulations that would protect all workers not just those employed in the telecommunications industry.

The potential health implications of RF radiation have been the subject of several recent statements and letters. On September 17, 2015, Senator Blumenthal and Congresswoman Eshoo issued a press release and sent the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) a letter, addressed to you, expressing their concern for workers being over-exposed to RF radiation at wireless transmission sites. Their letter points out that “[e]xcessive exposure to RF radiation leads to well-documented potential harms, especially to workers who spend time near the antenna and in the line of the antenna’s beam.” It is important to the IBEW that the FCC recognize this exposure goes beyond our members employed in the telecommunications industry. As pointed out in the IBEW’s June 14, 2015 comments regarding Communication Tower Safety, employers are rarely informed of the location of RF antennas. Furthermore, RF antennas are often not recognizable because they are intentional camouflaged with landscape or hidden by building features.

Our understanding is that the FCC does plan to address RF exposure through a proposed rule. Again, I urge you to seek industry input, and promulgate a rule as soon as possible. The IBEW hopes that the FCC’s proposal will protect all personnel, especially our members, with the same level of safety enjoyed by the wireless industry’s workforce. An updated RF regulation could go a long way to prevent unnecessary health risks associated with RF over-exposure.



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Page 2

Further details and suggestions for methods by which the FCC can accomplish this can be found in the IBEW's comments to the Occupational Health and Safety Organization referenced above. A copy of those comments has been enclosed for your convenience.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. The IBEW looks forward to your proposal.

Sincerely yours,

Lonnie R. Stephenson
International President

LRS:hds

Enclosure

Copy to Richard Blumenthal, Senator

Anna Eshoo, Congresswoman

Thomas E. Perez, Secretary of Labor

David Mullen, Director, IBEW Safety Department

Martha Pultar, Director, IBEW Broadcasting & Telecommunications Department

Ann Miller, Director, IBEW Political & Legislative Department