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February 17, 2016

The Honorable Tom Wheeler, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

On November 12, 2015, I wrote to you on behalf of North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU), its fourteen affiliated national and international unions and the three million construction workers they represent, to express our concerns about the thousands of workers who are at risk of being exposed to harmful levels of radiofrequency (RF) radiation from wireless antenna systems.

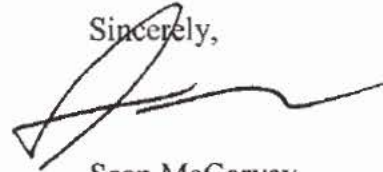
Since then, Verizon has filed an ex-parte letter (dated January 13, 2016), requesting "safe harbors with respect to carrier efforts to restrict access to and notify the public about the presence of radiofrequency emissions (RFE) on rooftops and at other accessible wireless transmitter locations..." and proposing that any "additional periodic inspections to ensure that carrier mitigation measures (such as signs and physical barriers) remain in place and in good condition... not be required more frequently than every two years." Verizon states that this safe harbor is needed because "there are limits to [its] ability to control the actions of third parties." Granting such safe harbors to Verizon or any other carrier and reducing the frequency of periodic inspections would only worsen the already hazardous situation facing our members and their employers, making it even harder for them to take steps to work safely.

Given that Verizon profits from and has primary control over all aspects of its wireless antenna systems, it has the influence, authority, and responsibility to ensure that construction workers and other "third parties" are protected. Instead of transferring its responsibilities and liabilities to others, Verizon and all other carriers should be required to ensure that anyone who works where wireless antenna systems are present has ready access to information about equipment locations, restricted areas, and how to go about having equipment powered down as needed to work safely. Verizon and the other carriers have this information and should make it available to construction employers, their employees, and other third parties.

We welcome the opportunity to work with the FCC, Verizon and the other carriers, site owners, and other stakeholders to develop a practical system that would protect the safety and health of workers in the construction industry.

As you near the final stages of addressing this issue in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), we once again ask the FCC to adopt final rules that will protect construction workers whose jobs require them to work around these antennas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sean McGarvey', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Sean McGarvey,
President

CC: Richard Blumenthal, Senator
Anna Eshoo, Congresswoman
Thomas E. Perez, Secretary of Labor
Dr. Michaels, Asst. Secretary of Labor