



CITY OF LONG BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

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PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER

June 22, 2017

The Honorable Cecilia M. Aguiar-Curry, Chair
California State Assembly, Committee on Local Government
1020 N Street, Room 157
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Oppose SB 649 (Hueso) – Wireless telecommunications facilities

Dear Chair Aguiar-Curry:

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write in strong opposition to SB 649. This bill would neutralize the City's ability to manage and regulate the way in which telecommunication small cell and cable equipment impact neighborhoods and business communities in Long Beach. Based on our experience managing these assets, Long Beach believes that SB 649 would result in a much more rapid deployment of telecommunication equipment in our cities, at a significant cost to the quality of life and local culture in our neighborhood and business communities. These changes will be visually apparent, and they will be financially significant.

In an effort to work with the telecommunications industry on this policy issue, Long Beach has met with Verizon officials on several occasions earlier in the legislative session. The City had hoped to identify a solution that would enable the telecommunication industry to obtain permits for small cells more expeditiously, while enabling cities to maintain local unique identities. Unfortunately, there remains a fundamental disagreement between many cities and counties, including the City of Long Beach, and the telecommunications industry. Long Beach believes local land use decisions, and the management of public infrastructure should remain within the purview of local jurisdictions, and not transferred to a private-for-profit industry.

The City of Long Beach takes pride in supporting a robust economy inclusive of modern technology, well-designed urban spaces, and a beautiful skyline. As a part of this responsibility, Long Beach manages space in the public right-of-way, including that which is used by the telecommunication and cable industries for siting of privately-owned equipment. The most recent small cell permit approved in Long Beach considered local aesthetics, as well as market rates. These permits were approved at a cost of \$1,500 annual fee per pole in downtown Long Beach, plus a one-time application fee of \$5,000. The term of the agreement between the City and the telecommunications provider is 10-years.

SB 649 proposes to limit the fees that a city or county may charge for the installation of a small cell telecommunications facility on publicly owned vertical infrastructure. The bill provides for a fee structure that ranges from \$100 to \$850 per small cell per year. The City is concerned with this language, as it significantly subsidizes the private sector with below market rates for the usage of public assets paid for by city residents.

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Long Beach understands the need to modernize the telecommunication permitting process given changes in technology. Zoning updates related to "small cells" were adopted in our City earlier this year, and will provide appropriate aesthetic and location standards for City residents and stakeholders, as well as increase clarity of regulations and efficiency of processing for the wireless industry. These updates can, and are, occurring without SB 649. If SB 649 passes, the updates streamlining "small cell" permits in Long Beach would become mute.

Given these reasons, the City of Long Beach strongly opposes SB 649 (Hueso).

Sincerely,



Patrick H. West
CITY MANAGER

cc: The Honorable Speaker Anthony Rendon, State Assembly
The Honorable Ben Hueso, State Senate, 40th District
The Honorable Steven Bradford, State Senate, 35th District
The Honorable Ricardo Lara, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Janet Nguyen, State Senate, 34th District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 64th District
The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell, State Assembly, 70th District
California State Assembly, Committee on Local Government