

April 21, 2021

The Honorable Bill Dodd
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2082
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Opposition to SB 556 (Dodd)—Street Light Poles, Traffic Signal Poles, Utility Poles, and Support Structures

Dear Senator Dodd,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write to respectfully oppose SB 556. This bill proposes to limit local control by requiring local governments to permit electric attachments to all public poles and structures. The City is committed to working with the Legislature to further the State's broadband goals with local design control.

SB 556 directly conflicts with the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) adopted regulations on wireless services deployment, which local governments nationwide are actively implementing. FCC regulations explicitly enable local governments to ensure that telecommunication installations meet appearance and design standards, maintain traffic safety, support the integrity of historical resources, and safeguard quality of life. To protect the public's investment, the control of public rights-of-way must remain local.

For the past 10 years, Long Beach has been named a Top 10 Digital City by the Center for Digital Government. While new technological advancements have helped the City achieve this recognition, a large portion of Long Beach does not have access to and use of in-home Broadband Internet. This finding led to a unanimous City Council decision in 2018 to approve the City's Digital Inclusion Initiative's development of a Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan and Roadmap (Roadmap). The City is in the process of co-creating the Roadmap with community members and local stakeholders. The foundation of the Roadmap will include a vision, goals, objectives, performance indicators, and strategies for advancing digital inclusion through a collective impact approach and equity lens as they relate to capacity, connectivity, and technology. Once the Roadmap has been developed, the City will work closely with community and local stakeholders to implement the plan to expand access to digital resources.

The City is committed to closing the digital divide, but the City opposes legislation that diminishes the City's local control over our rights-of-way. It is imperative that local governments coordinate installations with telecommunication providers to foster cohesion. SB 556 will conflict with the appropriate authority to manage rights-of-way and comply with existing FCC decisions. Given these reasons, the City opposes SB 556.

Sincerely,



THOMAS B. MODICA
City Manager

cc: The Honorable Speaker Anthony Rendon, State Assembly
The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Tom Umberg, State Senate, 34th District
The Honorable Steven Bradford, State Senate, 35th District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 64th District
The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell, State Assembly, 70th District

