



September 29, 2015

VIA FACSMILE: 916-558-3160

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor
State of California
State Capitol Building, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: CalWA supports Assembly Bill 57

Dear Governor Brown:

CalWA – The California Wireless Association (“CalWA”) writes this letter in support of California Assembly Bill 57 (“AB 57”) and urges you to sign this critical piece of legislation. CalWA is the state trade association representing the wireless infrastructure industry in California. CalWA’s members develop, own, manage, and operate towers, rooftop wireless sites, and other facilities for the provision of all types of wireless, telecommunications, and broadcasting services. CalWA and its members work with communities throughout the state in an effort to deploy wireless infrastructure in a way that responds to the unique sensitivities and concerns of each community.

Tourism is a huge industry in California and the many visitors to our state demand access to high speed wireless services to maximize their “California” experience. California’s businesses and citizens have come to depend on wireless services and devices in every aspect of their lives, from personal communication to complex business applications. On an annual basis, more and more individuals increasingly rely on wireless service as their exclusive means of voice communication while at home. In the state of California the number of households relying solely on wireless has tripled over the last 8 years and is poised to grow exponentially through the rest of the decade. Further, Californians rely on wireless devices for broadband data and apps. In 2013, U.S. mobile data usage grew one hundred and twenty percent. It is becoming rare to see a Californian without a smartphone. Wireless isn’t just for data, and apps, wireless services play a crucial public safety role as well. More than 70 percent of all emergency calls are placed with a wireless device, and a healthy wireless network with sufficient capacity and coverage is critical to ensuring California’s visitors and citizens have quick access to emergency services throughout our state.

Recognizing the need for quick access to emergency responders, Congress established the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) in 2012, and tasked it building the first high-speed, nationwide wireless network dedicated to public safety. To keep the costs of this national emergency network build down, FirstNet is looking to leverage existing wireless infrastructure and add their equipment to existing sites to the greatest extent possible. AB57 helps ensure the establishment of this important emergency network.

Not only does a robust wireless network infrastructure meet the needs of California’s vibrant tourism industry, it is critical to spur economic growth and promote job creation in our state. A recent study projected wireless infrastructure investment of \$34 to 36 billion per year through 2017 would yield \$1.2 trillion in economic development and 1.3 million net new jobs. AB57 would not only ignite economic development and job growth at a local level for businesses directly involved in broadband deployment—e.g., tower technicians,

electricians, contractors, and craftsmen, but also in those industries related to broadband such as the film industry, the app economy, mobile healthcare, and the Internet of Things as wireless moves to 5G. Businesses large and small look to broadband as a driver of productivity and the engine of economic development.

Rapid and timely network infrastructure deployment is necessary to ensure citizens have coverage at home, allow tourists to memorialize their vacations while keeping in touch with their hometowns, to meet the ever growing data demand, create new jobs, and promote quick access to public safety services. AB 57 strikes the balance of meeting the need for accelerated network deployment, while allowing municipalities to maintain their zoning authority. This legislation simply codifies the requirements imposed by the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") over the last few years in their efforts to streamline wireless deployments nationwide. AB 57 speeds up the siting process for applicants by providing a deemed approved remedy if the city or county fails to act on an application within the Federal Communications Commission's ("FCC") prescribed application timelines. Moreover, the bill defines wireless facilities as having a significant economic impact in the state. This legislation paves the way for not only California's citizen, but its visitors, to enjoy better coverage, improved public safety, and increased broadband capacity.

Governor Brown, this legislation provides urgently needed relief from municipal approval processes that have gone awry. Too often in our State, a simple antenna upgrade can take more than one year. Frequently, by the time the approved equipment is getting installed, it is already outdated and newer equipment is needed to address the needs of wireless consumers. A new cell tower can easily be in the approval process for 2 years or more after all of the required application materials have been submitted. Previously approved cell sites requiring renewal of their Conditional Use Permits can also be mired in the renewal process for 2 years. While the applications for wireless sites stall in the approval process, approval of subdivisions, new commercial structures, even new high rises get approved. If enacted, AB 57 would cut approval time for new cell tower sites to just 150 days, one-quarter of the time it can currently take under existing local law and approval processes. The Permit Streamlining Act has done little to address the disparate treatment of wireless siting applications with the result that California is becoming a very unfriendly state for carriers and broadband service providers seeking to expand or even upgrade their networks. By signing AB 57, you can help address this disparate treatment and put wireless infrastructure on a sure footing in California.

CalWA believes AB 57 will significantly improve access to wireless services in California. We ask you to join us in supporting this bill. Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned with any questions.

Sincerely,



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