

**For Immediate Release**

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**Local Leaders Express Disappointment as Assembly Committee Sides with Corporate Interests over Citizen Control**

***City, County Officials vow to continue fight against SB 649***

**Sacramento, CA** – A growing coalition of community leaders and local elected officials vowed to continue their fight to defeat what the Los Angeles Times called “an audacious power grab” by Telecom giants that will undermine local control, and transfer hundreds of millions of dollars from key government services to the bottom line of the world’s largest wireless companies.

SB 649 (Hueso) is backed by AT&T, Verizon, T-Mobile and Sprint, and is opposed by a broad coalition of local leaders including the League of California Cities, the California State Association of Counties, and the Rural County Representatives of California, in addition to 34 individual counties and over 215 cities.

The bill would incentivize companies to terminate their current agreements and unilaterally replace them with the reduced regulatory and fee structures in the bill. This would dramatically cut the fees companies must pay to cities for use of public property and allow them to place equipment wherever they want on public assets. It adds millions to telecom company profits, while exempting them from having to spend money on expanded wireless access for underserved communities.

“This bill shifts power and resources from local governments and our residents to the telecommunications industry,” said Lodi Council Member JoAnne Mounce, president of the League of California Cities. “This bad bill would render local residents and municipalities powerless to determine where and how public infrastructure is used by this industry as it seeks to add tens of thousands of new cell phone equipment to street lights, utility poles and public buildings throughout California. As local leaders we are all for progress but not at this cost.”

It also creates two different sets of rules — one for affluent coastal communities and another for rural and inland communities who would be rendered powerless by this legislation, and stand to lose the most under SB 649.

“In addition to the other myriad of problems associated with SB 649, the legislation also fails to impose any requirement for the wireless industry to deploy their networks to unserved or underserved parts of the state,” said Tehama County Supervisor Bob Williams, Chair of the Rural County Representatives of California. “Once again, California’s rural, disadvantaged communities are overlooked by Sacramento lawmakers, and California’s rural residents are left behind.”

“Decisions about local public infrastructure should be made at the local level, and that includes deciding where big telecom companies should be able to install new cellular equipment,” said Matt Cate, executive director of the California State Association of Counties. “SB 649 would allow them to install large, obtrusive antennas and additional equipment on almost any street light or signal light. Local residents and business owners would have virtually no say in the matter. This bill is bad public policy.”

The bill was approved on a 10-0-3 vote in the Assembly Communications and Conveyance Committee, even as the coalition against the bill continues to grow. The [Los Angeles Times](#),

[Sacramento Bee](#), [San Jose Mercury News](#) and [San Francisco Chronicle](#) have joined city and county officials from across the state to urge lawmakers to reject SB 649.

The bill will be heard next in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

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