



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA

July 9, 2019

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Member, U.S. Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Restoring Local Control Over Public Infrastructure Act – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I am writing in support to your “Restoring Local Control Over Public Infrastructure Act” (Act). RCRC is an association of thirty-six rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each of those member counties. RCRC member counties represent over 55 percent of California’s land mass and more than 4.3 million residents.

RCRC advocacy efforts focus on the unique challenges rural counties face when implementing state and federal policies. RCRC represents the political and geographic diversity found across rural America where a “one-size-fits-all” approach is rarely a viable option. For this reason, we opposed the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) Declaratory Ruling and Third Report and Order (Order) regarding state and local governance of small cell wireless infrastructure deployment.

The Order established an overly-restrictive application approval timeline, or “shot clock,” on small cell facility deployment, in addition to imposing other preemptions of local authority that hinder the ability of local governments to address land use concerns of their constituents. As California continues to experience catastrophic wildfires, many of which have been sparked by utility-owned equipment, the siting of telecommunication facilities should be subject to more scrutiny, not less. Fixed wireless infrastructure, particularly 5G technology, is many times co-located on other structures, including buildings, light poles and utility equipment. It is imperative that local governments retain the ability to fully analyze and assess the possible health and safety impacts of siting new telecommunication facilities and are afforded the time necessary to fully complete the process.

1215 K Street, Suite 1650, Sacramento, CA 95814 | www.rcrcnet.org | 916.447.4806 | Fax: 916.448.3154

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The Act would overturn the FCC's Order and restore the authority of local governments to make important determinations regarding the siting of wireless facilities in their respective communities. Local officials are best equipped to assess the impacts of these new telecommunication facilities on their residents and federal policies that preempt this application review process and lessen discretion presents significant concerns to rural counties in California. RCRC supports a regulatory framework that not only empowers local governments to determine the best pathway to viable broadband service in their communities, but also incentivizes broadband deployment to those rural areas that remain unserved and underserved. Thank you for reintroducing your bill to repeal the FCC's onerous order and restore authority to local governments.

If you should have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at trhine@rcrcnet.org or (916) 447-4806 or RCRC's legislative advocate in Washington D.C., Sheryl Cohen at cohen@acg-consultants.com or (202) 327-8100.

Sincerely,



TRACY RHINE
Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Charles Schumer, Member of the U.S. Senate
The Honorable Michael Bennet, Member of the U.S. Senate
The Honorable Kamala Harris, Member of the U.S. Senate
The Honorable Ron Wyden, Member of the U.S. Senate
The Honorable Ben Cardin, Member of the U.S. Senate
The Honorable Richard Blumenthal, Member of the U.S. Senate