



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers



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To: Members of the Pennsylvania Senate Communications and Technology Committee
Re: 5G Deployment Legislation Testimony

Greeting's members of the Senate Communications and Technology Committee.

Thank you for hosting us today. My name is Kris Anderson, and I am an International Representative for the IBEW, 3rd District. The 3rd District encompasses Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware. We represent 40,000 members in Pennsylvania, and of that, roughly 8,000 members work in the electric utility and telecommunications fields. With that said, we understand the tremendous opportunities and challenges that are created with the deployment of any new technology, such as 5G technologies.

With so many members who work in and around the facilities in which the new equipment will be installed, we feel it is imperative to be done in an order that protects the interests of the workers and the community. This technology is in high demand so we must partner together to ensure it is done properly so that reliable service can be delivered to consumers as soon as possible. The IBEW remains a committed partner in the deployment of this technology, and we have worked with our counterparts from the CWA to address the concerns of all workers in these areas.

Our proposed amendments are meant to clarify the needs of the workforce, while maintaining the integrity of the legislation. Our members see daily how space is already at a premium on most utility poles throughout the state. Most of the proposed facilities will be installed within the OSHA recommended minimum approach distance to energized conductors, which is 10 feet. We feel it is of the utmost importance to underscore the need for this equipment to not expand its footprint any further than necessary and that it is done to protect the worker safety, as well as the public safety.

Also, we must see that the facility owners are held to the same standards of other utility providers in the state by requiring them to inspect and maintain any equipment that is installed. These are the very same requirements that all other utility providers in the state must abide by.

We have seen many instances where there are double and triple poles left in locations where providers have failed to complete jobs. Work done in such a manner creates hazardous conditions for the public once the utility crews leave the work site. It is imperative that we maintain order in these already crowded spaces.

It is in our opinion, that the easiest way to accomplish these goals, and to efficiently deliver this technology, is by holding the contractors and developers to the same standards that the PUC requires of all utility providers.

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Utilizing responsible contractors can help us protect our collective interests while obtaining our goals. As consumers, we recognize the necessity to have this work done in a professional manner and we feel it is in the public's interest to do so, as well.

We realize the tremendous opportunity that is before us, but we feel all of this cannot be done at the expense of the Pennsylvania citizens who have borne the cost of building and maintaining the utility right of ways. We welcome the opportunity to broaden access to a more reliable wireless service while creating employment opportunities for Pennsylvanians. The IBEW stands ready with training centers equipped with the latest technologies and work practices, and the highest skilled workforce to assist in these efforts. We are prepared to be the ones who perform the jobs delivering this new technology.

We have approached this in a very finite manner with respect to all the collective hard work that has already been done by all interested parties. We have included a copy of our proposed amendments. We recognize the need to act expeditiously and welcome the further dialogue. We are eager to join in the efforts on the deployment of this technology. The IBEW appreciates your time and consideration for our comments.