

HCS HB 345 -- UNIFORM WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE
DEPLOYMENT ACT

SPONSOR: Cierpiot

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Utilities by
a vote of 22 to 0.

This substitute establishes the Uniform Wireless Communications Infrastructure Deployment Act to encourage and streamline the deployment of broadband facilities and to help ensure that robust wireless communication services are available throughout Missouri. In its main provisions, the substitute:

(1) Prohibits an authority as specified in the substitute with jurisdiction over wireless communications infrastructure from taking specified actions that could result in a non-uniform market for wireless service in Missouri. The prohibition does not include state courts having jurisdiction over land use, planning, or zoning decisions made by an authority. The prohibitions include:

(a) Requiring an applicant to submit information about or evaluate an applicant's business decisions with respect to its designed service, customer demand for service, or quality of its service to or from a particular area or site;

(b) Evaluating an application based on the availability of other potential locations for the placement of wireless support structures or wireless facilities including, without limitation, the option to add wireless infrastructure to existing facilities instead of constructing a new wireless support structure or for substantial modifications of a support structure or vice versa;

(c) Dictating the type of wireless facilities, infrastructure, or technology to be used by the applicant by requiring an applicant to construct a distributed antenna system in lieu of constructing a new wireless support structure;

(d) Requiring the removal of existing wireless support structures or wireless facilities, wherever located, as a condition for approval of an application;

(e) Imposing environmental testing, sampling, or monitoring requirements or other compliance measures for radio frequency emissions on wireless facilities that are categorically excluded under the Federal Communications Commission's rules for radio frequency emissions under 47 CFR 1.1307(b)(1) or other applicable federal law;

- (f) Establishing or enforcing regulations or procedures for RF signal strength or the adequacy of service quality;
- (g) Rejecting an application in conformance with 47 U.S.C. Section 332(c)(7)(b)(4), in whole or in part, based on perceived or alleged environmental effects of radio frequency emissions;
- (h) Imposing any restrictions with respect to objects in navigable airspace that are greater than or in conflict with the restrictions imposed by the Federal Aviation Administration;
- (i) Prohibiting the placement of emergency power systems that comply with federal and state environmental requirements;
- (j) Charging an application fee, consulting fee, or other fee associated with the submission, review, processing, and approval of an application that is not required for similar types of commercial development within the authority's jurisdiction. Fees imposed by an authority for or directly by a third-party entity providing review or technical consultation to the authority must be based on actual, direct, and reasonable administrative costs incurred for the review, processing, and approval of an application. In no case should total charges and fees exceed \$500 for a collocation application or \$1,500 for an application for a new wireless support structure or for a substantial modification of a wireless support structure. An entity with jurisdiction or any third-party entity cannot include within its charges any travel expenses incurred in a third-party's review of an application, and in no event can an applicant be required to pay or reimburse an authority for consultation or other third-party fees based on a contingency or result-based arrangement;
- (k) Imposing surety requirements, including bonds, escrow deposits, letters of credit, or any other type of financial surety, to ensure that abandoned or unused facilities can be removed unless the authority imposes similar requirements on other permits for other types of commercial development or land uses;
- (l) Conditioning the approval of an application on the applicant's agreement to provide space on or near the wireless support structure for authority or local governmental services at less than the market rate for space or to provide other services via the structure or facilities at less than the market rate for the services;
- (m) Limiting the duration of the approval of an application;
- (n) Discriminating or creating a preference on the basis of the ownership, including ownership by the authority, of any property,

structure, or tower when establishing rules or procedures for siting wireless facilities or for evaluating applications;

(o) Imposing any unreasonable requirements or obligations regarding the presentation or appearance of facilities including, but not limited to, those relating to the kind or type of materials used and those relating to arranging, screening, or landscaping of facilities;

(p) Imposing any requirements that an applicant purchase, subscribe to, use, or employ facilities, networks, or services owned, provided, or operated by an authority, in whole or in part, or by any entity in which an authority has a competitive, economic, financial, governance, or other interest;

(q) Conditioning the approval of an application on, or otherwise requiring, the applicant's agreement to indemnify or insure the authority in connection with the authority's exercise of its police power-based regulations; or

(r) Conditioning or requiring the approval of an application based on the applicant's agreement to permit any wireless facilities provided or operated, in whole or in part, by an authority or by any entity in which an authority has a competitive, economic, financial, governance, or other interest, to be placed at or connected to the applicant's wireless support structure;

(2) Allows authorities to continue to exercise zoning, land use, planning, and permitting authority within their territorial boundaries with regard to the siting of new wireless support structures, requirements and with regard to applications for substantial modifications of wireless support structures. The authority must review, within 150 days of receiving an application to construct a new wireless support structure or within the additional time as may be mutually agreed to by an applicant and an authority, the application as to its conformity with applicable local zoning regulations and advise the applicant in writing of its final decision to approve or disapprove the application. The authority must, within 90 days of receiving an application for a substantial modification of wireless support structures, review the application as to its conformity with applicable local zoning regulations and advise the applicant in writing of its final decision to approve or deny the application. Procedures for extending these deadlines and fixing deficiencies are also specified in the substitute. A party aggrieved by the final action of an authority or its inaction may bring an action for review in any court of competent jurisdiction;

(3) Requires an application for an application for additions to or

replacement of wireless facilities to be reviewed for compliance with applicable building permit requirements. The authority must, within 45 days, review the application as to its conformity with application building permit requirements and consistency with the provisions of the act and advise the applicant in writing of its final decision to approve or deny the application. However, procedures for expediting or extending the deadline and for fixing deficiencies are also specified in the substitute;

(4) Specifies that the provisions of the substitute do not authorize an authority, except when acting solely in its capacity as a utility, to mandate, require, or regulate the placement, modification, or attachments of any new wireless facility on new, existing, or replacement poles owned or operated by a utility or expand the power of an authority to regulate any utility;

(5) Prohibits an authority from instituting a moratorium on the permitting, construction, or issuance of approval of new wireless support structures, substantial modifications of wireless support structures, or attachments to existing facilities of wireless communication infrastructure; and

(6) Prohibits an authority from charging a wireless service provider or wireless infrastructure provider any rental, license, or other fee to locate a wireless support structure on an authority's property in excess of the current market rates for rental or use of similarly situated property. An authority may not offer a lease or contract to use public lands to locate a wireless support structure on an authority's property that is less than 15 years in duration. A process for the resolution of any disputes over fair market value lease payments using appraisers appointed by both parties is also specified in the substitute.

MUNICIPAL POLE ATTACHMENTS

The substitute requires any pole attachment rates, terms, and conditions demanded by a municipal utility pole owner or controlling authority of a municipality to be "just and reasonable" based on specified federal regulations.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill will help expand wireless broadband networks by creating uniform, statewide standards for the placement of broadband infrastructure. The bill will ensure that wireless companies are treated in the same manner as other commercial ventures while allowing full cost recovery by political subdivisions for regulatory expenses.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Cierpoit; AT&T; U. S. Cellular; Verizon Wireless; and T-Mobile USA, Inc.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that cities should retain control over the permitting and use of city property. Aesthetic considerations are important in many cities and wireless infrastructure should conform to local zoning requirements. Different communities use different standards and the best practices should be based on local considerations rather than the imposition of a uniform state standard.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri Municipal League; and St. Louis County Municipal League.