HR 2289 Would be Catastrophic for Human Health and the Environment

The purpose of HR 2289, currently being considered in the U.S. Congress, is to remove all local control over the rollout of 5G cell towers. There are many reasons that unregulated 5G (which stands for 5th generation),will bring devastation. It will greatly increase the risk of out of control fires, and cause very adverse health impacts, for which there is extensive documentation,

Overloading Utility Poles Causes High Risk of Wildfires

Unless you have been paying very close attention to the rollout of these small cells (short for cell towers), you may not be aware that they can allow for small-refrigerator-size cabinets of heavy equipment, filled with highly flammable material (diesel or propane fuel, or lithium batteries), to be hung perilously from utility poles--or placed on the ground—-closely spaced throughout our neighborhoods. In news reports of a wildfire sweeping through Santa Rosa, it was noted that propane generators were exploding everywhere.

Senator Dianne Feinstein has warned about the risks of wildfires caused by overloading utility poles with these small cell installations, as she wrote in this OpEd: "Wireless companies won't bear the responsibility when things go wrong. Attaching 5G cells that are the size of mini-refrigerators to city poles will make poles less stable. When poles come down, they pose significant risk for physical harm, property damage, blackout and even wildfires in dry regions. And under FCC rules, cities and residents would be on the hook for that damage."https://www.mercurynews.com/2020/01/16/opinion-cities-should-decide-how-and-where-5g-is-employed/

We already know that overloading utility poles can be the cause of a wildfire that can destroy a community, as happened in Malibu in 2007. http://archive.vcstar.com/news/accusations-exchanged-over-utility-poles-after-malibu-fire-ep-371956105-%20350885791.html/ Those poles in Malibu didn't even contain the possibility of the ticking-time-bomb fuels that the 4G/5G installations may contain. What if there's an earthquake, car accident, or period of high winds?

Even before the rollout of these hundreds of thousands of new "mini cell towers" throughout the U.S., cell towers have often been the source of fires.

You can see numerous articles about dangers of cell towers here. https://ourweb.tech/fires-and-collapses/

Also extremely concerning re fire dangers, is the testimony by fire safety expert Susan Dana Foster, at an April 19, 2021 hearing of the California Assembly Committee on Energy, Utilities

and Communications (concerning SB 556). This fire safety expert testified that the telecom companies have often managed to evade electrical codes at the state, county and local level.

Even more alarming, firefighters cannot even directly fight the fires using water at small cell installations, because they are electrical fires and they would risk electrocution. They have to wait for the power to be shut off, which can take from ten minutes to two hours. Would you want a small cell installation burning out of control outside a child's bedroom for up to two hours?

Add to that the very high fire risk caused by the smart meters that the telecoms quite often place on the 4G/5G installations.

Here is a link to comprehensive report (50 pages) on the fire hazards presented by smart meters. https://smartmeterharm.files.wordpress.com/2019/07/fire-and-electrical-hazards-report.pdf The report describes many reasons that smart meters have led to fires. Most notably, unlike analog meters, smart meters do not have surge protectors or any connection to ground (pp. 4-5). When a power surge hits them, which often happens after a utility re-energizes electrical lines after a power shut-off (more and more common now), these meters can explode and cause a fire (p. 6 and 8).

When worker-whistleblowers have attempted to alert the power companies to the problem of smart meters causing fires, they have been fired. At a CA Public Utilities Commission hearing held in Santa Rosa in 2012, a former Pacific Gas and Electric worker named Patrick Wrigley testified that he noticed frequent fires related to smart meters, when the power was turned on after it had been off for a while. When he reported this problem to his superiors, instead of acting to protect the community, they fired him. (His testimony can be seen in the excellent documentary "Take Back Your Power," available online.)

Due to periodic periods of severe drought in some areas, the U.S. has been at great risk from out-of-control wildfires.

We simply cannot afford this technology, so filled with potential danger, to be expanded with no oversight by local governments. . .Usually the costs we hear associated with wildfires are what firefighters run up during the suppression phase. The National Incident Management Situation Report provides those daily for most ongoing large fires.

But other costs may be many times that of just suppression, and can include structures burned, crops and pastures ruined, economic losses from decreased tourism, medical treatment for the effects of smoke, salaries of law enforcement and highway maintenance personnel, counseling for post-traumatic stress disorder, costs incurred by evacuees, infrastructure shutdowns, rehab

of denuded slopes, flood and debris flow prevention, and repairing damage to reservoirs filled with silt. https://wildfiretoday.com/2020/10/08/the-true-cost-of-wildfire-2/

Bill would Saddle Under-served Communities with Expensive and Inferior Internet

Wireless internet connections are more costly than the wired connections, and slower to boot. (The much-touted promise of faster internet speeds from 5G has generally not materialized according to tests done by the editors of PC Magazine.)

What's the alternative to the disaster that is occurring throughout the country, which this bill would like to expand—the disaster of ubiquitous and ugly 4G/5G installations littering our neighborhoods? Copper wire ethernet and cable have none of the downsides of 4G/5G wireless infrastructure, the only benefit of which is to increase the industry's profits. Congress should be reinvigorating and adding to the wired connections that have served people so well, without any of the downsides of wireless cell towers which emit massive radiation into our schools, elder facilities, and homes.

These small cells are not actually for the purpose of increasing internet access. The industry argues that (small) cell towers in our neighborhoods are necessary for 5G internet, which claims to provide faster download speeds and also facilitate the internet of things, by which every item in our environment will be connected via electrosmog. Yet some upscale California communities, such as most towns in Marin County, have refused to allow these extremely dangerous small cells in their residential districts, while still enjoying all the benefits of highspeed internet.

Numerous Peer Reviewed and/or Government Studies showing Harm to Health

The wireless industry would also like you to believe that "the jury's still out" on whether wireless radiation has harmful health impacts. However, peer-reviewed, published science indicates that exposures to wireless radiation increase rates of cancer, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, male infertility, memory loss and Alzheimers. (See Sarah Benson's review of the studies here https://biocircuitry.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/2014-Joining-the-Dots-now.pdf . Of particular note are the cancer clusters that have been found to occur in people living close to cell towers, which Benson describes beginning on p. 9.

The new small cells have the same 4G technology that have been found to be associated with these greatly increased rates of cancer etc., with the added bonus of the ultra-high frequency 5G technology. The evidence of harmful health impacts from wireless radiation was given a big boost with the release of a $30-million dollar study, conducted by the National Toxicology Program of NIH, which found "clear evidence" of a link between wireless radiation from cell

phones/wireless devices and cancer. https://microwavenews.com/news-center/ntp-final-rf-report

Just because a young child playing with an iPhone or video game is not experiencing immediate health effects, studies have shown that this population is the one that is most vulnerable, due to children's thinner skulls. It takes ten to twenty years for brain cancers to develop from constant exposure to wireless radiation, and when these children become young adults, their doctor may or may not make the connection to their childhood addiction to wireless gadgets. Doctors have less difficulty diagnosing the cause for the increasing amounts of breast cancer in young women, cancers discovered to be in the exact shape and size of the cell phone the young women carried in their bras.

As described by Joel Moskowitz of Berkeley's School of Public Health, writing in the Scientific American, over 250 scientists and medical doctors from around the world issued a declaration calling for an immediate moratorium on the rollout of 5G cell antennas, citing human health effects, and impacts to wildlife. (https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/we-have-no-reason-to-believe-5g-is-safe/) The frequencies of the new 5G antennas will be much, much stronger than the previous 4G (4G operates at 6Ghz or less, while 5G begins at 24 Ghz and can go up to 100, or even 300, Ghz). As opposed the previous "macro towers," which were put in out-of-the-way areas to protect the public, the new "small cells," are to be located everywhere that people live, work and play.

Thousands of studies have found harm to health and the environment from wireless radiation (see https://www.greenmedinfo.health/anti-therapeutic-action/electromagnetic-fields and www.mdsafetech.com and http://www.bioinitiative.org), and these dangerous effects will be magnified tremendously with 5G. An industry spokesperson admitted to Congress that there are no studies showing the safety of 5G radiation, and they do not plan to do any.

Even the U.S. Court of Appeals Agrees—No Evidence that Cell Tower Radiation is Safe

In August of 2021, the United States Court of Appeals ordered the FCC to throw out its antiquated safety guidelines created in 1996--before there was 3G, 4G or 5G, and before there were so many different sources of wireless radiation permeating our environment, leading to greater and greater cumulative absorption of this radiation. The result of increased absorption has yielded a whole range of negative health effects. This Federal case against the FCC was brought by the Environmental Health Trust, et. al., and was supported by over 11,000 scientific studies.

The Appeals Court declared "the FCC's failure to provide a reasoned explanation for its determination that its 25-year-old guidelines adequately protect against the harmful effects of exposure to radiofrequency radiation unrelated to cancer, renders its decision capricious, arbitrary and not evidence based, in violation of the Administrative Procedures Act (APA)."

As one of the plaintiff attorneys, Dafna Tachover, noted, "This ruling from the second highest court in the country effectively stated that at this point in time it cannot be argued that the FCC guidelines are protective or that wireless and 5G are safe. The wireless technology industry is proceeding as if this ruling never took place."

Firefighters Given Protection from Cell Tower Proximity, but None for Community

According to medical writer Susan Foster, who did a study in 2004 of firefighters who worked at a station with a 2G cell tower placed nearby (a much less powerful frequency than the proposed 4G/5G installations), after five years, all the firefighters studied suffered major neurological damage. Some of the impaired firefighters, on more than one occasion, were unable to find their way around town in response to a 911 call, in the town where they had lived all their lives. (Foster describes her study in a letter dated August 14, 2017, to California Assembly Member Lorena Gonzalez-Fletcher, Chair of the Appropriations Committee, regarding the proposed bill SB 649.)

Foster also notes in her letter what an invitation to lawsuits against the government this presents. AB 57 (passed into California law in 2015), the failed 2017 bill SB 649, and the 2021 bill AB 537, give exemptions to fire stations from close proximity cell installations. If firefighters, among the healthiest and strongest members of our community, are given an exemption on health grounds, what about young children, the aged, or infirm, who are much more susceptible to this kind of injury? Or are we starting to revert to the philosophy of Nazi Germany, where the weak and infirm were considered to be useless eaters, to have "life not worthy of life"?

Increasing Cell Tower Radiation is Very Harmful to Wildlife + Invasion of Privacy

The term small cells may sound innocuous, but the reality is quite different. The wireless antennas will emit microwaves and basically function as cell towers. Each installation can have hundreds of antennas that are transmitting simultaneously and 24/7. (See https://www.cellphonetaskforce.org/5g-from-blankets-to-bullets/) As previously mentioned, this radiation harms wildlife https://ehtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Radiofrequency-EMFs-and-Effects-to-Wildlife-EHT-Flyer-pdf.pdf

It will provide much more surveillance of our personal lives. (https://www.dundee.ac.uk/news/2018/5g-study-raises-security-concerns-for-next-generation-of-mobile-communication.php) More about immense 5G surveillance and cyber security issues here-- https://www.newyorker.com/news/annals-of-communications/the-terrifying-potential-of-the-5g-network

The likely cyber attacks will result in huge costs to local and state governments. Wired connections are not subject to cyber attacks.

Ubiquitous Towers Prevent Accurate Weather Prediction

Because 5G is somewhat blocked by buildings and trees, the quality of connections will not be great and the speeds will slow down when many people are using it. 5G even prevents accurate weather prediction, which is so essential in these days of increasingly devastating climate events.

((https://www.washingtonpost.com/weather/2019/11/22/global-g-deal-poses significant-threat-weather-forecast-accuracy-experts-warn/?fbclid=IwAR1M_DdlYXhZkRYinNRchdPVfWUuR7hCFV5dRbxBqPsdbp1QCLssr9YLFS4)

European Governments are Taking Protective Measures, Why isn't the United States?

In Europe, many countries are starting to officially recognize the harm that wireless radiation is causing, and are calling for more limitations and regulation of this technology, even banning it in some areas (as in schools for young children and public libraries). Yet we in the United States are so enamored of this technology that we are supposed to accept an ever more massive and unregulated roll-out of cell towers, despite the hundreds of peer-reviewed studies showing great harm to health.

Profound but Hidden Fiscal Impacts

What are the fiscal impacts of this increasingly massive and unregulated roll-out? A lot more people will be getting sick. A lot more people will be unable to work and needing paid sick leave. A lot more children will be staying home from school and for every school day missed, the schools will not get paid for that child's attendance.

A lot more people will be needing to take extended leave from their jobs and will require disability payments. A lot more people will be flooding into doctors' offices and emergency rooms, looking for the unknown cause of the terrible headaches, confusion, ear ringing, seizures, nose bleeds, chest pain and heart palpitations, and numerous other symptoms that people have reported as result of massive exposure to wireless radiation (most noticeable after

the smart meter roll-out, since the symptoms suddenly occurred which had not been present before). The doctors may or may not be able to properly diagnose them and medical treatments are virtually non-existent.

How many untold billions will future out of control wildfires cost to governments, businesses, and residents?

Increased Homelessness Will Result

People, especially those on the lower end of the income scale (who cannot afford very expensive measures for personal protection from wireless radiation) will end up becoming homeless, sleeping in their cars as they only way to limit the amount of their exposure. Those without cars will be left with zero options, not even homeless shelters, since virtually all the residents carry cell phones.

Transferring Liability away from Telecoms to the Government

And of course there will be lawsuits. As attorney Harry Lehmann pointed out a few years ago, in his excellent legal analysis of the impact of California's SB 649 (the unsuccessful bill to allow for massive rollout of 4G/5G installations with no community oversight), it is a thinly disguised strategy to transfer most or all of the liability from the industry to the government. Every week brings new studies and new evidence of harm from wireless radiation, and when people begin to understand the cause of the illness which is destroying their lives, they will turn to legal action.

The U.S. can Avoid These Disasters by Exercising the Precautionary Principle

Instead of passing this bill, HR 2289, that will immensely add to the long painful process of allowing and encouraging additional unregulated wireless towers everywhere, and then discovering what a huge mistake that was, from every possible angle, why not exercise the Precautionary Principle, and provide government support only for technologies that have been proven to be safe, energy-efficient, extremely fast, and protective of people and the environment?

Congressional Update: Some observers believe that we may have dodged the bullet represented by this bill, when the House Rules Committee, on April 20, 2026, voted to postpone voting on the bill, because apparently it did not have enough votes to pass. It has been the subject of immense opposition from local governments, health practitioners, and grassroots activists. However, this does not mean the bill is dead. The lobbying from well-

funded industry lobbyists is intense. It can be resurrected and passed by the Rules Committee at any time, and a floor vote is likely to quickly follow.

If you live in the U.S., and you would like to add your voice of opposition to HR 2289--and all related bills whose aims are to greenlight the expansion of cell towers with no local government oversight--please contact your federal representatives in Congress and the Senate.

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