

RESOLUTION NO. 19-

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF CLEARWATER, FLORIDA URGING THE STATE LEGISLATURE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO INITIATE A STUDY OF THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF SMALL CELL TOWERS BUILT TO ACCOMMODATE 5G TECHNOLOGY AND TO DEVELOP INSTALLATION GUIDELINES PROTECTING THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF RESIDENTS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, small cell wireless equipment is designed to boost cellular service from the existing wireless carriers and will enable those carriers to implement 5G technology by placing these installations on existing streetlights and utility poles; and

WHEREAS, concerns have been raised about the health risks of 5G technology including small cell installations. Many studies have linked low-level wireless radio frequency radiation exposures to adverse biological effects including DNA single and double strand breaks, oxidative damage, disruption of cell metabolism, increased blood brain barrier permeability, melatonin reduction disruption to brain glucose metabolism and generation of stress proteins. This list warrants additional scientific studies before residents are put at risk; and

WHEREAS, the health hazards of 5G technology have been intensely debated at the federal level before Congress and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). There does not appear to be any widely accepted definitive scientific study that proves one way or the other whether small cell installations — emitting extremely high or “millimeter wave” frequencies above 24 GHz — may have an adverse health impact, although in 2011 the World Health Organization classified radio frequency radiation as a possible 2B carcinogen; and

WHEREAS, the only applicable FCC standards for radio-frequency radiation emissions were set in 1996 and did not consider the use of modern wireless equipment like small cells that will be located close to residences. Mere compliance with the FCC’s outdated standards does not assure safety; and

WHEREAS, the State of Florida has preempted local governments from regulating the installation of small cells as it relates to their potential health effects or proximity to residential areas; and

WHEREAS, the FCC adopted regulations in 2018 that are intended to facilitate the installation of 5G technology “underscore[ing] the FCC’s commitment to ensuring that the United States wins the global race to 5G,” as stated in the FCC Press Release dated September 26, 2018; and

WHEREAS, global communications and technological advancements are important components of the state and federal economy but need not come at the expense of the public’s health. As the world’s leading economy, the United States can and should “win the global race” while protecting its residents from potential long-term health effects that will only further harm the economy in the future; and

WHEREAS, the FCC's action allows private cell providers the right to put antennas and transmission control boxes on city-owned streetlight poles and privately-owned utility wood poles subject to only minimal limitations. This means that a 5G antenna could be mounted on the streetlight or utility pole in front of a resident's home, and there would be little the resident could do about it. Given the health concerns described above, the City believes this should cause great concern for all City residents; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council hereby find it is in the best interest of the residents to urge the state and federal governments to initiate independent, scientifically reliable studies of the health effects of small cell wireless and 5G technology on residential populations and develop guidelines for the installation of this technology that will protect the health and welfare of the public.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CLEARWATER, FLORIDA:

SECTION 1. Each of the above recitals are hereby incorporated herein.

SECTION 2. The Mayor and City Council hereby urge the state and federal governments to initiate independent scientifically reliable studies of the health effects of small cell wireless and 5G technology on residential populations and develop guidelines for the installation of this technology that will protect the health and welfare of the public.

SECTION 3. The City Council hereby directs the City Clerk to transmit a copy of this Resolution to all appropriate entities.

SECTION 4. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2019.

George N. Cretekos
Mayor

Approved as to form:

Attest:

Pamela K. Akin
City Attorney

Rosemarie Call
City Clerk