

July 3, 2017

The Honorable Miguel Santiago
Chair, Assembly Communications and Conveyance Committee
State Capitol, Room 6027
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Senate Bill 649 (As Amended June 20, 2017) Wireless Telecommunications Facilities
Notice of Opposition

Dear Assembly Member Santiago:

MuniServices respectfully opposes SB 649 (Hueso) that would limit the fees that local governments may charge for “small cell” wireless facilities. The bill as recently amended now applies to all telecommunication providers and the equipment they use from “micro-wireless” to “small cell” to “macro-towers.” **SB 649 compromises local authority and will result in local revenue losses from the respective rents, royalties and concessions.**

MuniServices for nearly 40 years has worked *exclusively* as partner to California’s local governments in developing thoughtful revenue enhancement programs that work in conjunction with existing public services. It is our position that municipal agencies are unique and must retain the flexibility to make decisions and adopt policies that best meet the local service needs.

MuniServices’ opposition focuses on SB 649 provisions that compromise local authority and local revenues. In addition to the permitting issues raised by this bill, it would also cap how much cities can negotiate leases for use of public property and a city’s ability to maximize public benefit at \$250 (was \$850 under prior version of the bill) annually per attachment rates for each “small cell.” Some cities have been able to negotiate leases for “small cells” upwards of \$3,000, while others have offered “free” access to public property in exchange for a host of tangible public benefits, such as free Wi-Fi in public places, or network build-out to underserved parts of their cities, agreements usually applauded by both cities and industry.

MuniServices encourages public-private partnerships; SB 649 will compromise civic priorities and local authority. Ultimately, cities and local governments recognize that the wireless industry offers many benefits in our growing economy, but a balance with community impacts must also be preserved. For the reasons stated above, MuniServices respectfully opposes SB 649 and requests a “no” vote when the bill comes before the Committee. If you have any questions regarding MuniServices position do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,



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CC: Honorable Ben Hueso
Members, Assembly Communications and Conveyance Committee
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