

The Ayoub Family

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March 18, 2010

Mr. John W. Fonfara, Co-Chair
Ms. Vickie Orsini Nardello, Co-Chair
Senator Kevin Witkos, Ranking Republican
Representative Sean Williams, Ranking Republican
and Members of the Energy and Technology Committee
Energy and Technology Committee
Room 3900, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Energy and Technology Co-Chairs, Ranking Members, and Committee:

Do you remember the first time someone offered you a cigarette, or perhaps that you considered smoking? You had a choice to make and we *now* know that choice potentially affected the future of your health and welfare. Our children are faced with a similar situation, one that could be seriously detrimental to their health in years to come, with two important distinctions: 1) the "choice" has been taken out of their hands and placed in the hands of the Connecticut Siting Council as guided by the Telecommunications Act of 1996; and 2) "conventional wisdom" says at this time there isn't enough research to prove the health effects of repeated and consistent RF exposure (though recently it seems you can't turn on the TV, pick up a magazine or the newspaper without seeing a piece that calls into question the safety of cellular technology, most recently discussed in Time magazine, The CBS Evening News and "O" magazine/Dr. Oz) and the Telecommunications Act of 1996 prevents the topic from even being raised. Remember when they told us cigarettes were safe and how long it took to prove what we all instinctively knew -- that they weren't? All that's left for our children to do is potentially suffer from the myriad health effects associated with having a Cell Tower sited close to a location where they are federally mandated and locally-districted to spend the majority of their day -- at their school.

I am writing to urge you to support (Raised) HB No. 5504 concerning the siting of cell towers near schools.

We feed our children organic foods to prevent exposure to pesticides and other additives we think may be harmful to their health, we no longer use pesticides on our lawns or on their playing fields, some schools are even removing the recycled rubber on their playgrounds and playing fields due to fears about its safety, and we don't use certain types of plastic for baby bottles or heat plastic in the microwaves because of fears of toxic emissions or residue. All of this because we know children are more sensitive to environmental contaminants (and that includes microwave radiation) and want to be "on the safe side" when it comes to the health and safety of our children. However, our children and we, on their behalf, currently have no meaningful say in the matter of where Cell Towers get sited in our towns. Doesn't it make sense that we err on the side of precaution in this matter as well?

And Connecticut is not alone in voicing their desire for a precautionary approach. Palm Beach, FL; Los Angeles, CA; Arcata, California; Great Barrington, MA; Vancouver School Board, British Columbia, Canada; The International Association of Firefighters, and the European Parliament, to name just a few recognize the need to set some kind of priorities and standards for where these towers get sited.

By supporting this bill you will send a message loud and clear that Connecticut holds the health and welfare of its children as of the utmost importance, and that the "greater good" is not served by locating such structures in close proximity to schools.

Please, as a parent of 9 year old twins an concerned member of the community, keep our children as your top priority. They can't choose where they go to school, but you can choose to keep them safe in those schools.

Sincerely,

Karen Ayoub