



State of Connecticut

SENATE

STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

SENATOR MICHAEL A. McLACHLAN
TWENTY-FOURTH SENATE DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 3400
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591
CAPITOL: (800) 842-1421
E-mail: Michael.McLachlan@cga.ct.gov
WEB SITE: www.SenatorMcLachlan.cga.ct.gov

MINORITY WHIP

RANKING MEMBER
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS
COMMITTEE

MEMBER
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

March 18, 2010

Testimony in Support of HB 5504 An Act Concerning Siting of Cell Phone Towers Near Schools and SB 461 An Act Concerning Siting Council Proceedings and Decisions

Chairman Fonfara, Chairman Nardello, Ranking Member Witkos, Ranking Member Williams and other committee members thank you for taking the time to raise H.B. 5504 An Act Concerning Siting of Cell Phone Towers Near Schools and S.B. No. 461 An Act Concerning Siting Council Proceedings and Decisions. Together these bills will prove beneficial to municipalities facing the imposition of telecommunications towers.

I have always been a strong proponent for allowing local land use boards to vote on telecommunications tower projects. I believe that the current process of allowing the municipality to participate as a party at a hearing has really prevented local zoning boards from protecting their constituents. Last year I proposed SB 180, An Act Concerning Municipal Approval of Cellular and Personal Communications Systems Towers, which would have given local land use agencies the authority to regulate the siting of cellular and personal communications systems towers, and limit the authority of the Connecticut Siting Council to override the local agencies' orders. I firmly believe that empowering local land use boards to make these decisions is in the best interest of our citizens. These boards have an intimate knowledge of the most appropriate locations for telecommunications facilities in their towns.

SB 461 requires in addition to the siting council to when issuing a certificate for a telecommunications facility to consider the latest technological options designed to minimize aesthetic and environmental impacts. This bill also requires council may consider regional location preferences from neighboring municipalities. I believe this bill will make the siting council more sensitive to the needs of municipalities.

HB 5504 requires that when the siting council is considering an application for a telecommunications facility that the facility must be at least seven hundred fifty feet from

a school. I think this bill is a common sense way to protect our children from possible negative effects of electro magnetic frequency (EMF) waves.

The Environment Committee recently passed SB 206 AAC Local Land Use Agencies and the Siting of Telecommunication Towers. This bill, which I have co-sponsored, will give local land use authorities the power to regulate the siting of telecommunication towers. I hope this committee will look favorably upon that bill when it is referred here because I believe that is the best way to ensure that local leaders have a vote on these controversial projects.

I support the changes that SB 461 and HB 5504 will make to the process of siting telecommunications towers. I hope the committee will act favorably on these bills and give some relief to citizens who feel that they are powerless against siting council decisions.