



Office of the Mayor and Town Council

Tim Meerbott
Mayor

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Town Council

From: Mayor Tim Meerbott

Date: May 15, 2019

Re: 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

REQUEST

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CUTLER BAY, 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 TRANSMITTAL; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

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. Concerns have been raised about the health risks of 5G technology, including small cell installations. There are several studies linking 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.





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. 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.

The FCC allows private cell providers the right to put antennas and transmission control boxes on town-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 Town believes this should cause great concern for all Town residents.

This Resolution urges 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.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Town Council adopt the Resolution, which gives direction to the Town Clerk to transmit the Resolution to the appropriate officials.

