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Local Government Support Builds for Carr’s 5G Order
More than Several Dozen Mayors, Local Officials, and State Lawmakers Back Order

WASHINGTON—On September 26, the FCC will take its next step in ensuring that the United States wins the global race to 5G, the next generation of wireless service, to the benefit of communities across the country. It will do so by voting on the grassroots reforms championed by local and state officials. Their commonsense ideas are key to supporting the deployment of small cells, which are the building blocks of 5G.

“More than several dozen mayors, local officials, and state lawmakers have called on the FCC to streamline the rules governing small cell buildout,” Commissioner Carr stated. “They want the FCC to build on the commonsense reforms adopted in state legislatures and town councils across the country so that every community—from big city to small town—gets a fair shot at next-generation connectivity. As they put it, FCC action will help spur investment and infrastructure buildout in their communities, while helping the U.S. win the race to 5G. I am glad to see the support from this diverse group of state and local officials.”

Some of the statements from local officials, representing 15 different states, can be found here:

Mayor Ashton Hayward, Pensacola, Florida: “I ... appreciate your efforts to establish some common-sense standards insofar as it relates to fees associated with the deployment of small cells. Unfortunately, we have seen a cottage of industry consultants emerge who have wrongly counseled communities to adopt excessive and arbitrary fees. ... This approach results in nothing more than telecom providers being required to spend limited investment dollars on fees as opposed to spending those limited resources on the type of high-speed infrastructure that is so important in our community.”

Commissioner Maureen Davey, Stillwater County, Montana: “the Commission’s actions to lower regulatory barriers can enable more capital spending to flow to areas like ours. Reducing fees and shortening review times in urban areas, thereby lowering the cost of deployment in such areas, can promote speedier deployment across all of America.”

Chairman Todd Nash, Commissioner Susan Roberts, and Commissioner Paul Castilleja, Wallowa County, Oregon: “decreasing the cost of urban deployment will indirectly promote more rural investment, because the capital that is no longer diverted towards buildout in urban areas is available in

rural areas. In short, allowing cities to demand fees without limits harms the FCC’s policy objective to foster more broadband in rural areas.”

Mayor Michael Taylor, Sterling Heights, Michigan: “there are significant, tangible benefits to having a nation-wide rule that promotes the deployment of next-generation wireless access without concern that excessive regulation or small cell siting fees slows down the process. . . . In sum, by voting at your September meeting to promote more affordable small cell siting, the Commission can help create more innovative, more dynamic, and healthier communities.”

Mayor Scott Neisler, Kings Mountain, North Carolina: “the North Carolina General Assembly has enacted legislation to encourage the deployment of small cell technology to limit exorbitant fees which can siphon off capital from further expansion projects. I was encouraged to see the FCC taking similar steps to enact policies that help clear the way for the essential investments that will promote necessary upgrades to network infrastructure to ensure that Kings Mountain remains a great place to both live and do business.”

Chairman Jeffrey Bohm, Board of Commissioners, County of St. Clair, Michigan: “Smaller communities . . . would benefit from having the Commission reduce the costly and unnecessary fees that some larger communities place on small cells as a condition of deployment. These fees, wholly disproportionate to any cost, put communities like ours at an unfair disadvantage. . . . By making small cell deployments less expensive, the FCC will send a clear message that all communities, regardless of size, should share in the benefits of this crucial new technology.”

Sheriff Fred A. Lamphere, Butte County, South Dakota: “it is critical that the Commission . . . require[e] regulatory fees to be based on costs, set[] reasonable timelines to review applications, and prohibit[] unreasonable restrictions on deployment. Reducing deployment costs will particularly benefit rural areas such as Butte County by freeing up more investment capital which will then be available for those areas.”

Rep. Andy Thompson, State Representative, Ohio: “if the attachment of each small cell to a phone pole or building is subjected to the same permitting process and fees as a giant tower, many communities won’t be seeing 5G for quite some time. . . . Streamlining regulations would tremendously help the rapid deployment of 5G in communities of all sizes. . . . Many states like Ohio have been taking action on their own. That’s encouraging, but it doesn’t change the fact that a consistent framework is best for speedy deployment; hence the value of action at the federal level.”

Sen. Duane Ankney, State Senator, Montana: “Where I see the problem is, that most of investment capital is spent in the larger urban areas. This is primarily due to the high regulatory cost and the cost recovery can be made in those areas. This leaves the rural areas out. I believe that by reducing the high regulatory costs in the urban areas would leave more dollars to development in the rural areas. Establishing timelines by modernizing the permitting process would also help in building out into the rural areas.”

Rep. Terry Alexander, State Representative, South Carolina: “if the investment that goes into deploying 5G on the front end is consumed by big, urban areas, it will take longer for it to flow outwards in the direction of places like Florence. . . . [O]utdated regulations that amount to excessive fees, stacks of

papers and long wait times could make us wait longer for 5G. That's not an outcome we want – especially if we get held up because resources were held up elsewhere.”

Commissioner Mary Whisenand, Iowa Commission on Community Action Agencies: “I am heartened to see the Commission taking steps to help 5G get here faster by reducing red tape caused by old rules. With 99 counties in Iowa, we understand the need to streamline the network buildout process so it's not just the big cities that get 5G but also our small towns. If companies are tied up with delays and high fees, its going to take that much longer for each and every Iowan to see the next generation of connectivity.”

Rep. Jason Saine, State Representative, North Carolina: “Commissioner Carr's 5G order will create a . . . minimal regulatory standard across the United States. Such a standard is critical to ensure that the United States can win the race to be the first 5G economy. . . . I strongly urge the FCC to adopt Commissioner Carr's order at their September 2018 meeting.”

Rep. Kathy Byron, State Representative, Virginia: “Your determination to come forward with a plan – modeled on the regulatory reforms enacted in 20 states, including Virginia – increasing access to 5G connectivity will positively affect the lives of people across our nation.”

Rep. John Richard C. King, State Representative, South Carolina: “many of the current local permitting policies regarding wireless infrastructure, written to accommodate cell towers, do not work well for small cell antennas. A patchwork system of town-to-town, state-to-state rules slows down the approval of small cell installations and delays the deployment of 5G. . . . I appreciate the work the FCC has done thus far to streamline small cell permitting and speed the deployment of 5G wireless. Please continue to address the barriers that stand in the way of widespread access to this technology.”

Rep. Justin Hill, State Representative, Missouri: “I commend the FCC for paving the way for 5G implementation & closing the digital divide! A firm plan!”

Rep. Brian Hill, State Representative, Ohio: “While the FCC and the Ohio Legislature have worked to reduce the timeline for 5G deployment, the same cannot be said for all local and state governments. Regulations written in a different era continue to dictate the regulatory process for 5G infrastructure.”

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