



May 4, 2021

Via Email

The Honorable Deborah Mohlenhoff
City of Ithaca
City Hall
108 E. Green St.
Ithaca, New York 14850

Re: Campanelli and Associates Memo

Dear Councilmember Mohlenhoff,

On behalf of CTIA, the trade association for the wireless communications industry, I write to clarify the record on the technology commonly referred to as 5G. 5G, or fifth generation, represents a huge leap forward in wireless technology, promising economic and social benefits in Ithaca and across America. Despite the transformational opportunities presented by this technology, there is no shortage of misinformation about 5G. At a recent Committee of the Whole Meeting (April 26, 2021), Ithaca's leaders were presented with a memo by Campanelli and Associates pertaining to 5G deployment, wireless communications and Ithaca's role in this process. We feel it necessary to clarify the record on a few key points.

The Coronavirus pandemic ("COVID-19") has had a staggering impact on jobs, industries, and communities across America. COVID-19 exposed the need for increased connectivity in nearly every sector of our economy. Specifically, this public health emergency has highlighted just how important it is for wireless communications to be reliable, fast and prepared to handle increased demand.

Strong wireless networks enable distance learning for students separated from teachers; telehealth for patients and health care providers; employees to work from home; small businesses to shift operations online; older adults to stay in touch with family and combat social isolation; public safety personnel to utilize the best resources for their, and our safety; and so much more. As state and local officials continue to take action in response to COVID-



19, it is important that our path forward is one that, among other things, supports expanded and improved wireless services, which in turn facilitates improved livelihoods and increased economic opportunities.

Unfortunately, the memo circulated by Campanelli and Associates ignores the importance and role of wireless in our everyday lives. Firstly, the memo makes unfounded claims about a supposed negative relationship between wireless communications facilities and property values. These claims run counter to what Americans report as being important to them when purchasing a new home. As a Morning Consult poll shows, Americans ranked reliable wireless service (67 percent) higher than good schools (65 percent), reasonable home prices (60 percent), and good commuting times (41 percent). In fact, only quality health care and hospitals outranked the availability of wireless with homebuyers.¹

In addition, the memo also contains misinformation about the safety of wireless facilities. The consensus among health experts, including the American Cancer Society, the World Health Organization, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, is that the weight of scientific evidence shows no known adverse health effects to humans from exposure to wireless antennas or devices.

- “... there is no convincing scientific evidence that the weak RF signals from base stations [cell towers] and wireless networks cause adverse health effects.” – World Health Organization²
- “Based on our ongoing evaluation of this issue, the totality of the available scientific evidence continues to not support adverse health effects in humans caused by exposures at or under the current radiofrequency energy exposure limits.” – The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)³

¹ CTIA, “New Data Underscores Value Consumers Place on Wireless,” <https://www.ctia.org/news/consumers-value-wireless>, last accessed 04/27/2021.

² World Health Organization, “Electromagnetic Fields and Public Health,” <https://www.who.int/peh-emf/publications/facts/fs304/en/>, last accessed 04/27/2021.

³ FDA Statement, Statement from Jeffrey Shuren, M.D., J.D., Director of the FDA’s Center for Devices and Radiological Health on the National Toxicology Program’s report on radiofrequency energy exposure, Nov. 1, 2018, <https://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm624809.htm>, last accessed 4/27/2021.



- “... although many studies have examined the potential health effects of non-ionizing radiation from radar, microwave ovens, cell phones, and other sources, there is currently no consistent evidence that non-ionizing radiation increases cancer risk in humans.”—National Cancer Institute⁴
- In December 2019, the FCC unanimously reaffirmed its existing limits for radio frequency exposure – which includes 5G technology – noting, “After reviewing the extensive records submitted in response to that inquiry, we find no appropriate basis for and thus decline to propose amendments to our existing limits at this time.”⁵

Furthermore, regulation based on the alleged health effects of 5G wireless facilities is expressly prohibited under federal law. As outlined in Section 332(C)(7)(B)(iv) of the Telecommunications Act, “No State or local government or instrumentality thereof may regulate the placement, construction, and modification of personal wireless service facilities on the basis of the environmental effects of radio frequency emissions to the extent that such facilities comply with the [FCC]’s regulations concerning such emissions.”

In closing, we would be remiss in not highlighting the enormous economic benefits localities will experience due to 5G deployments. The Boston Consulting Group estimates that 5G deployments will contribute \$1.5 trillion to U.S. GDP and create 4.5 million jobs over the next decade. In New York, these economic benefits could exceed \$123 billion in GDP growth, and result in the creation of more than 291,000 jobs over the next decade.⁶

A standardized framework that maintains local control, while ensuring timely ability to upgrade existing wireless facilities and access to infrastructure in the public rights-of-way based on clear timelines and reasonable permitting costs in conformance with federal law, is critical to promoting wireless infrastructure deployment. This regulatory framework and certainty sends a message that New York welcomes wireless investment and ensures the residents, visitors and businesses of Ithaca will continue to experience robust wireless connectivity.

⁴ National Cancer Institute, “Cell Phones and Cancer Risk” Factsheet (2019), <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/radiation/cell-phones-fact-sheet>, last accessed 04/27/2021.

⁵ See <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-19-126A1.pdf>, last accessed 04/27/2021.

⁶ “The 5G Economy Will Spur Massive GDP and Job Growth Across the US.” *BCG Global*, Feb. 2, 2021, www.bcg.com/press/2february2021-5g-economy-will-spur-massive-gdp-and-job-growth-across-the-us, last accessed 4/27/2021.



Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to discussing this important issue to ensure the wireless industry can continue building in the City.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bethanne Cooley". The script is fluid and cursive.

Bethanne Cooley
Assistant Vice President
State Legislative Affairs

cc: The Honorable Svante L. Myrick
 The Honorable Cynthia Brock
 The Honorable George McGonigal
 The Honorable Joseph "Seph" Murtagh
 The Honorable Ducson Nguyen
 The Honorable Donna Fleming
 The Honorable Rob Gearhart
 The Honorable Graham Kerslick
 The Honorable Stephen Smith
 The Honorable Laura Lewis