Testimony of
Bethanne Cooley
Director, State Legislative Affairs
CTIA
Support for Rhode Island House Bill 5224
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Before the Rhode Island House Corporations Committee

Chair Jacquard, Vice-Chair Messier, Vice-Chair Johnston, Jr. and Members of the Committee, on behalf of CTIA, the trade association for the wireless communications industry, I am here in support of House Bill 5224, related to the deployment of small cell facilities. The people of Rhode Island continue to demand – at increasing levels – access to wireless products and services. This is demonstrated by the fact that 95% of Rhode Islanders use wireless and over one in three adult Rhode Islanders live in wireless-only households.[1][2] These demands from the wireless industry's customers – your constituents – require that wireless networks be updated today and readied for the next generation of wireless networks. House Bill 5224 is a needed mechanism to accommodate consumer demands and help to realize the future.

Small cell facilities are being widely deployed to accommodate this increased demand. Small cells are wireless antennas, typically no more than six cubic feet in volume, and associated equipment, generally less than twenty-eight cubic feet in volume, that are being installed on existing structures like utility poles, street lights and traffic signal poles. This global trend is sweeping the country. More than 250,000 small cells are expected to be installed over the next few years in the United States, nearly the number of traditional "macro" cell sites built over the last 30 years.

Small cells enhance capacity on existing 4G LTE wireless networks by efficiently using scarce spectrum, and they will be required for the higher-frequency spectrum 5G networks will depend on. The benefits provided by 5G are astounding. 5G networks will provide increased capacity to accommodate growing consumer demands by connecting 100 times more devices. Imagine a future where nearly everything is connected to ubiquitous wireless networks at speeds up to 100 times faster than today. Imagine communities that are smarter and more connected. Entire sectors, from public safety to transportation, will be transformed.

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[1] U.S. Census, Population Estimates, at http://www.census.gov/data/tables/2016/demo/popest/state-total.html, last accessed 3/18/2017.
[2] CDC / NCHS, National Health Interview Survey Early Release Program, Modeled Estimates of the Percent Distribution of Household Telephone Status for Adults Aged 18 and over, by State: United States, 2015, August 2016, at http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless_state_201608.pdf, last accessed 3/18/2017.

In fact, Accenture recently published a study noting that 5G wireless networks could create as many as three million jobs and boost the U.S. GDP by nearly $500 billion over the next seven years.[3] Furthermore, a report recently published by Deloitte illustrates how other industries are leveraging today's wireless platform for innovation and growth, and how increased wireless deployment will spur even more advancements in these key economic sectors[4]:

- **Energy**. Wireless-enabled smart grids could create $1.8 trillion for the U.S. economy—saving consumers hundreds of dollars per year.
- **Health**. Wireless devices could create $305 billion in annual health system savings from decreased costs and mortality due to chronic illnesses.
- **Public Safety**. Improvements made by wireless connectivity can save lives and reduce crime. A one-minute improvement in emergency response time translates to a reduction of 8% in mortality.
- **Transportation**. Wireless powered self-driving cars could reduce emissions by 40-90%, travel times by nearly 40% and delays by 20% – and translate to $447 billion per year in savings, and, more important, 21,700 lives saved.

That's the promise of the next-generation of wireless technology. America needs to lead in its deployment.

House Bill 5224 helps to remove barriers to efficient deployment of small cell wireless infrastructure by streamlining processes and imposing reasonable rates and fees. House Bill 5224 allows providers the opportunity to deploy small cells responsibly by having reasonable access to existing local infrastructure within and outside of the public rights-of-way (ROW). House Bill 5224 makes small cells on existing infrastructure a "permitted use" and not subject to the type of review larger "macro" towers receive. The legislation would also ensure that a small cell application is approved within 60 days if there are no deficiencies indicated by local government. House Bill 5224 also allows for consolidation of substantially similar small cell applications in order to minimize administrative impacts while improving efficiency.

Finally, it is important to note that House Bill 5224 places no limitations on localities' ability to deny permits based on building, safety or electrical codes or standards. There is no removal of localities' jurisdiction in these areas.

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[3] "How 5G Can Help Municipalities Become Vibrant Smart Cities," Accenture Strategy, Jan 12, 2017, https://newsroom.accenture.com/content/1101/files/Accenture_5G-Municipalities-Become-Smart-Cities.pdf, last accessed 3/20/17.

[4] Deloitte, "Wireless Connectivity Fuels Industry Growth and Innovation in Energy, Health, Public Safety, and Transportation," http://www.ctia.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/deloitte_20170119.pdf, last accessed 3/18/2017.

In closing, since 2010, wireless providers have invested more than $177 billion to improve their coverage and capacity and better serve Americans, with $32 billion invested in 2015 alone.[5] As stated above, more than 250,000 small cells are expected to be installed over the next few years in the United States. Appropriate siting and land use regulation will facilitate and encourage capital investment because capital tends to flow to places that are ready for investment. House Bill 5224 will send a signal that Rhode Island is ready for investment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 5224. CTIA strongly urges its approval.

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[5] CTIA's Wireless Industry Summary Report, Year-End 2015 Results, 2015, http://www.ctia.org/industry-data/ctia-annual-wireless-industry-survey, last accessed 3/18/2017.

Example of a Small Cell