



**Testimony of
Bethanne Cooley
Director, State Legislative Affairs
CTIA
Opposition to Connecticut House Bill 6309
February 7th, 2017**

Before the Connecticut Joint Energy and Technology Committee

Chair Reed, Co-Chair Winfield, Co-Chair Formica, and members of the Committee, on behalf of CTIA, the trade association for the wireless communications industry, I write to respectfully express our opposition to House Bill 6309. House Bill 6309 amends existing law to require the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) to hold public hearings “where changes will be made to existing structures.” Such a provision would hamper wireless facility development in Connecticut and severely slow the deployment of advanced wireless technologies that Connecticut residents and emergency service providers rely on every day.

Wireless networks and the ability to deploy and upgrade existing network infrastructure is paramount to CTIA members and their customers. This is particularly true in Connecticut, as wireless subscribers have increased 12% since 2010.¹ These wireless subscribers are not just making voice calls, but are consuming more bandwidth as new applications, devices and technologies come online. In order to meet this demand, since 2010, wireless providers have invested more than \$177 billion to improve their coverage and capacity to better serve Americans, with \$32 billion invested in 2015 alone.²

Wireless providers need the flexibility, the regulatory certainty and the assurance that facility upgrades can and will be approved in a timely fashion. Today, a vast majority of these wireless facility upgrades and modifications are approved by Council staff through

¹ FCC Voice Telephone Services Report: Status as of June 2015, August 2016, <https://www.fcc.gov/voice-telephone-services-report>, last accessed 2/2/2017.

² CTIA's Wireless Industry Summary Report, Year-End 2015 Results, 2015, <http://www.ctia.org/industry-data/ctia-annual-wireless-industry-survey>, last accessed 1/29/2017.



an administrative process as provided by current Council regulations. HB 6309 would require that the Council hold a public hearing every time a wireless provider needs to add or replace an antenna or switch out antenna cables or other wireless equipment. Such a requirement will not only inundate the Council, but also severely impede wireless infrastructure deployment throughout Connecticut.

In closing, as noted, the demand for high quality and reliable wireless service continues to soar in Connecticut and across the nation. A robust wireless network is needed in order to accommodate this demand. As proposed, House Bill 6309 would severely hinder the wireless industry's ability to meet this demand by interrupting today's processes and unnecessarily overwhelm the Council with public hearings and severely impede wireless providers' ability to update, improve and maintain their networks.

For all the reasons described herein, we respectfully ask the Committee to reject House Bill 6309.