

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

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September 28, 2017

The Honorable Jerry Brown
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 649 – REQUEST FOR VETO

Dear Governor Brown:

On behalf of the County of El Dorado, I write to respectfully request your VETO on Senate Bill 649, which would allow wireless providers unfettered access to public property for placement of “small cell” structures without regard to the aesthetic and environmental impacts of these facilities. Under SB 649, these not-so-small “small cell” structures would be allowed on public property in *any* zone in a city or county, removes a County’s ability to negotiate fees for the placement of the structures and, perhaps most important, prevents public input on the design and placement of the structures.

The County of El Dorado is a rural northern California county located within the six-county Sacramento Region. Many of our residents, especially in the more rural areas of our County, do not have access to regular and/or reliable broadband service. Our County is firmly committed to exploring and securing partnerships and opportunities that will support our efforts to expand the infrastructure necessary to provide broadband access to all of our businesses and residents.

This request for your veto does not conflict with our desire to close the existing digital divide.

Our greatest concern is the elimination of the County’s discretionary review of the placement of additional cell structures on County lands, including street lights, utility poles, traffic signals, public buildings or any other location telecommunications companies may deem reasonable.

SB 649 would give telecommunications companies unrestricted access to our public lands, leaving no ability for local residents to voice their concern or for local government to negotiate leases for the placement of equipment. We must be able to continue to safeguard our environment and protect the aesthetics of our small communities; it is a primary reason people decide to make El Dorado County their home.

SB 649 erodes local control of community aesthetics, devalues taxpayer-invested public property, potentially causes public safety issues, and completely prevents the public from participating in the process.

For these reasons, we urge your veto of SB 649.

Respectfully,

Shiva Frentzen
Chair, Board of Supervisors
County of El Dorado

cc: The Honorable Ted Gaines, California State Senate
The Honorable Frank Bigelow, California State Assembly
The Honorable Kevin Kiley, California State Assembly
Rural County Representatives of California
California State Association of Counties
League of California Cities