



March 2, 2017

## CORRECTED LEGISLATIVE ALERT

(Please use this alert in place of the Alert from Feb. 28)

**Wireless Communications Infrastructure  
Oppose [SB 596 \(Hutson\)](#) & [HB 687 \(La Rosa\)](#)**

**SB 596** (Hutson) and **HB 687** (La Rosa) eviscerate local control for Florida cities with respect to taxpayer owned public structures and right-of-way (generally roadway and sidewalk areas) for placement of “small” or “micro” wireless antennas and equipment by the multi-billion dollar wireless communications industry. The bills prohibit local governments from regulating anything except applicable building codes for this wireless infrastructure. Wireless communications providers and speculators will be able to ignore land development regulations, pedestrian movement, traffic view zones, traffic circulation as well as safety and aesthetic considerations. By unreasonably capping the permit application and attachment fees as well as limiting the permit review timeframe, the bills require taxpayers to subsidize the business interests of wireless communications providers. The bills require a city, at its taxpayers’ expense, to develop engineering and other structural reports on the city’s own structures that a wireless company may or may not decide to use for an antenna. Should this legislation pass, there WILL be a proliferation of wireless infrastructure, in some cases the size of a refrigerator, in areas where such equipment and infrastructure is unsightly, unsafe and inappropriate for that particular community.

### **Contact your legislators before Session begins Next Week**

This week is the last chance to speak with your Legislator while they are at home in the district before the start of the 2017 Legislative Session. Please use the talking points below to communicate with your legislators and urge them oppose legislation that would give telecommunications companies unfettered access to public rights-of-way.

If you have any questions, concerns or need any additional information contact FLC Legislative Advocate Megan Sirjane-Samples at 850-701-3655 or [msirjanesamples@flcities.com](mailto:msirjanesamples@flcities.com)

**You can also use the League’s [Contact Your Legislator](#) advocacy tool to e-mail your legislators.**

**Thank you for your advocacy efforts!**

## **Help Stop Threat to Local Authority from Bad Telecom Bills Talking Points**

Florida's communities embrace the latest innovations in technology to improve the lives of our citizens. But it's outrageous for giant corporations to be empowered to trample on the authority and responsibility of our local elected officials to protect public safety and the aesthetics of our communities. That's exactly what will happen if telecom companies are given open and unchecked access to disrupt public equipment and our rights-of-way – paid for with our tax dollars.

1. The Florida Legislature is considering SB 596/HB 687, a bad bill that could become a dangerous new law. It would:
  - Blatantly interfere with the ability of hundreds of communities to protect public safety and maintain their local, unique look and feel.
  - Allow unchecked proliferation of new poles and equipment that could jeopardize public safety by interfering with pedestrians, enticing kids to climb recklessly, creating additional debris in a hurricane, and tying up space that should be reserved for police/fire radio antennas.
  - Nullify the wisdom of Florida cities to bury utility lines. Those communities would be forced to allow ugly, invasive towers up to 60 feet high on public-access land.
  - Accept refrigerator-sized equipment glommed onto existing structures or sidewalks in public rights-of-way, creating a permanent eyesore.
2. The bill leaves taxpayers defenseless:
  - It amounts to a corporate handout, allowing giant for-profit companies to install infrastructure on publicly owned structures at almost no cost to them – they make the smallest investment possible, building on the backs of the taxpayers.
  - Taxpayers would be burdened with the expense of making sure plans for towers meet building codes – even if the wireless companies later drop those plans.
  - Once the telecom companies move on to the next technology, communities would be stuck cleaning up the abandoned equipment – now junk – that they leave behind.
3. The legislation stomps out local decision-making:
  - It would strip decision-making from the hands of the local community's elected officials.
  - Big Telecom would win its way for its private agenda – and stick everyone else as the loser.
  - Telecom companies would be given preferential treatment to “cut in line” in the local permit review process, making everyone else second-class citizens.

There's time to stop this statewide plan that could disrupt every local community. Before this bad bill becomes a dangerous law, state legislators need to step up, speak out, and fight for the best interests of the local constituents who sent them to Tallahassee – rather than boost the agenda and profits of giant corporations.