

Comments Submitted to the FCC by Maryland Smart Meter Awareness re FCC Proposed Move to 5G

July 11, 2016

Maryland Smart Meter Awareness (MSMA) strongly opposes the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) unstudied, untested move to 5G wireless networks.

A month ago, the \$25 million National Toxicology Program (NIEHS/NTP) study revealed initial findings clearly establishing that **2G** cell phone radiation causes DNA damage and carcinogenic effects. Further results on the toxicology and carcinogenesis of RFR will be forthcoming in the next two years. The NTP chose to release these preliminary findings now **"because of their importance for public health."** John Bucher, Associate Director of the NTP, explained that even a small finding could have broad implications for human health since cell phones and other wireless devices are used so widely.

The NTP study follows in the wake of decades of **independent**, peer-reviewed studies that show adverse health effects from wireless radiation. While many other countries are currently moving to lower public exposure, FCC Chair Tom Wheeler intends to do the opposite. Wheeler not only disregards the independent science, but wants to **fast track** a move to **5G**. Chair Wheeler states, "We won't wait for the standards to be first developed.... Instead we will make ample spectrum available and then rely on a private sector-led process" completely circumventing scientific investigation and public discussion.

Wheeler then goes on to explain, **"5G build out is going to be very infrastructure intensive, requiring a massive deployment of small cells."** Virtually every home or lamppost will be outfitted with a small cell tower to accommodate his vision of the **"Internet of Everything."**

5G will use higher frequencies than the public has ever been exposed to before; and Independent scientists and health experts were not consulted about the effects of these new frequencies or the density of the incumbent infrastructure. Neither were the American people consulted about whether we would want to sell our health and well being in exchange for a gain of a few milliseconds in Internet speed, and an intrusive, cumbersome **"Internet of Everything"** that would require us to accept cancer causing, radiation-emitting devices on every home or lamppost.

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For three decades the FCC has maintained that radiofrequency microwave radiation is safe because it does not heat tissue. However, the overwhelming consensus of **independent** science is that significant bio-effects occur **even in the absence of tissue heating**. The recent and ongoing NTP study specifically uses non-thermal levels of exposure and has already released findings of harms from such exposures thus proving

once again, that ***adverse health effects occur at non-thermal levels***. It should be noted that the NTP study was conducted using 2G technology which is orders of magnitude lower than what will be needed for 5G. Catering to industry, the FCC continues to rely on this outdated assumption - the result being a Maximum Permissible Standard (MPE), in the USA, which is hundreds, sometimes thousands of times higher than most other countries permit.

In 1996, at the bidding of industry, Congress “silenced the public” with the passage of the Telecommunications Act, perhaps the most lobbied bill in history. This bill removed the right of state or local municipalities to oppose the installation of a cell tower based on health or environmental concerns. This travesty will necessarily be increased monumentally to accommodate the needed infrastructure for 5G. Wheeler, intending that nothing stand in his way, states, “To make sure we have this connectivity with high-band spectrum will require a lot more small cells, which means a lot more antenna siting decisions by local governments. That’s why it’s important that the Commission has streamlined our environmental and historic preservation rules, and tightened our ‘shot clock’.”

And so it should come as no surprise that the 330-page FCC Notice of Public Rulemaking fails to mention the health issues at all. Instead the document reflects Chair Wheeler’s goals and follows the FCC’s long established tradition of giving free reign to industry to “do as it will,” with little, or no governmental oversight and no public choice.

According to Wheeler, “The future has a way of inventing itself.” Without independent study and testing of 5G ***BEFORE it is unleashed on an unknowing and unsuspecting public***, the future that “has a way of inventing itself” is a future many of us won’t want to see.

Sincerely,

Katherine Kheel,
Director, Maryland Smart Meter Awareness