



September 27, 2017

Honorable Gina M. Raimondo
Governor, State of Rhode Island
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Request for Signature – House Bill 5224/Senate Bill 342 – Small Cell Siting Act

Dear Governor Raimondo,

On behalf of CTIA, the trade association for the wireless communications industry, I am writing in support of House Bill 5224/Senate Bill 342 (H5224/S342 hereafter) promoting the deployment of next-generation wireless networks. The legislation creates a critical framework to promote job creation, economic investment and opportunity throughout Rhode Island and I urge your signature.

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 require that wireless networks be both updated to meet the existing demand and readied for the next generation of wireless networks.

Specifically, the existing rules governing wireless networks are designed for 200-foot wireless towers along a highway. Tomorrow's networks will rely on new small cell technology, often the size of a shoebox, which will be placed on top of telephone poles and streetlights. These new networks need new rules and H5224/S342 establishes an updated common sense framework to facilitate millions in new investment in Rhode Island.

Critically, these small cells will help unlock new 5G services from remote healthcare solutions to autonomous cars. 5G networks will provide needed new capacity to accommodate growing consumer demands and help connect 100 times more devices. In a few short years, nearly everything will be connected to ubiquitous wireless networks at speeds up to 100 times faster than today, thanks to the framework established by H5224/S342. Rhode Island's communities will be smarter and more connected, and entire sectors, from public safety to transportation, will be transformed.

¹ U.S. Census, Population Estimates, at <http://www.census.gov/data/tables/2016/demo/popest/state-total.html>, last accessed 9/26/2017.

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 9/26/2017.



Accenture has found that 5G and small cell deployments will provide tremendous economic benefits. Specifically, Accenture estimates that wireless operators will invest as much as \$275 billion nationwide over seven years as they build out 5G. Furthermore, it is estimated that up to three million jobs could be created as well as approximately \$500 billion added to the U.S. GDP through direct and indirect potential benefits.³

H5224/S342 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. H5224/S342 also allows for consolidation of substantially similar small cell applications in order to minimize administrative impacts while improving efficiency.

In closing, Rhode Island has clearly expressed a desire to be a leader in innovation as demonstrated by its issuance of a 5G RFI late last year. Rhode Island stands to be the first state in the Northeast to be at the forefront of innovative policy. Staying the course with enactment of H5224/S342 will ensure that Rhode Island gets there.

We strongly and respectfully urge your signature on H5224/S342.

Sincerely,

Jamie Hastings
SVP, External and State Affairs
CTIA

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 9/26/2017.