



April 5, 2021

**MAYOR &  
CITY COUNCIL**

Judy Ritter  
Mayor

Joe Green  
Deputy Mayor

John B. Franklin  
Councilmember

Corinna Contreras  
Councilmember

Katie Melendez  
Councilmember

**CITY MANAGER**  
Patrick Johnson

The Honorable Ben Hueso  
Chair, Senate Energy, Utilities, and Communications Committee  
State Capitol Building, Room 4035  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 556 (Dodd) Street Light Poles, Traffic Signal Poles, Utility Poles, and Support Structures: Attachments. Notice of OPPOSITION (As Amended 03/16/21)**

Dear Senator Hueso,

The City of Vista respectfully opposes SB 556 (Dodd), related to wireless broadband infrastructure deployment.

SB 556 directly conflicts with the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) adopted regulations on wireless services deployment, which cities and counties across the nation are actively implementing. This measure requires local governments to make space available to telecommunications providers without recognizing local authority to manage the public right-of-way preserved in federal law. FCC regulations explicitly enable local governments to ensure that such installations meet appearance and design standards, maintain traffic safety, protect historical resources' integrity, and safeguard citizens' quality of life. To protect the public's investment, the control of the public rights-of-way must remain local.

Additionally, SB 556 creates ambiguity in the fees local governments can charge for access to their infrastructure. Federal law explicitly outlines conditions for valid fees, limiting fees to a "reasonable approximation of the local government's actual and direct costs," including costs to maintain a structure within the right-of-way, process an application or permit, and review a siting application. SB 556, on the other hand, chooses not to incorporate these federal standards, further restricting fees to "actual cost" and "reasonable actual cost." There should be no added ambiguity created by changes at the state level from what was already decided at the federal level.

The City of Vista opposes any efforts that preempt local authority. SB 556 is an attempt by the telecommunications industry to undermine local authority while making no meaningful progress towards closing the digital divide in California's unserved and underserved communities. If California is to close the digital divide, legislative efforts should focus on encouraging and incentivizing telecommunications companies to service areas that for too long have not had access to reliable and affordable internet.

The City of Vista is ready to work with the Legislature to further the state's broadband goals in ways that do not conflict with local authority to manage the right-of-way and comply with existing FCC decisions. For these reasons, the City of Vista opposes SB 556 (Dodd).

Sincerely,

Judy Ritter  
Mayor  
City of Vista

cc: The Honorable Bill Dodd  
Senator Pat Bates, [cynthia.bryant@sen.ca.gov](mailto:cynthia.bryant@sen.ca.gov)  
Assemblymember Tasha Boerner Horvath, [celia.mata@asm.ca.gov](mailto:celia.mata@asm.ca.gov)  
Catherine Hill, League of California Cities, [chill@cacities.org](mailto:chill@cacities.org)  
League of California Cities, [cityletters@cacities.org](mailto:cityletters@cacities.org)