

12/3/12

The Committee Secretary
The Senate Standing Committee on Environment & Communications
PO Box 6100
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee members

A submission in support of the Telecommunications Amendment Mobile Phone Towers
Bill 2011

I am writing to you as a private citizen who has concerns about the current Australian 2007 telecommunication legislation, and therefore welcomes the current amendments to the Telecommunication Bill 2011.

My interest in the current legislation stems from recent experiences with Telstra, local council and Members of Parliament in relation to the construction of a 30 meter telecommunication tower which can be viewed from my home. The tower was erected in April 2011 it is situated in the car park of a small business which is set in a residential area.

Unfortunately as per current legislation we were not consulted prior to the construction of this telecommunication tower as only those residents who lived less than 60 meters to or adjacent to the tower needed to be consulted.

Of note is that this tower is on the same premises as a 7 meter mobile phone antenna device. Both have been sited in close proximity to 2 primary schools and a kindergarten and are adjacent to and directly face a number of residential homes. The

Closeness of such structures to each other raises the question as to the need for a more a coordinated approach when planning where to place devices and towers.

In our particular situation we have had to contend with visual pollution, real estate devaluation and ongoing anxiety regarding possible future health concerns from the constant electromagnetic radiation emitted from the tower. It is also rumored that the hotel owner has received a large undisclosed sum of money from Telstra for housing the tower on their business property. Financial benefit will usually win over civic mindedness and more transparency in the process of application to the council and financial gains by interested parties would be welcomed.

My experience with this telecommunication tower has demonstrated to me that the current 1997 Telecommunication Act does not protect the democratic rights of the community. It does however favor large corporations who do not base their decisions re towers on the health and wellbeing of a community but instead on financial gain.

Finally I would like to raise the health issues associated with phone towers; I note that a growing body of scientific research suggests that close proximity to telecommunication towers increases the rates of a number of concerning health conditions including some cancers. With new more powerful frequencies being launched (i.e. 3G and 4g (Imax and LTE) which have no mandated safety levels) the current legislation disregards research findings that are widely recognized throughout Europe. To disregard the research is to conduct a very dangerous unethical science experiment.

So in summary given the current scientific debate the precautionary principle should take precedence and legislation should be conservative rather than liberal. The acceptable levels of radiation directed at the public can always be increased if in 10 or 20 years time we are sure that the higher levels are safe. Now is the time to consider providing early interventions that will promote and protect the health and well being of our community as occurs currently in countries such as Sweden and as is well documented by a number of well conducted peer reviewed studies highlighted in the BioInitiative report.

I am grateful for the review of the current legislation and I hope that all political parties both at a State and Federal level can come together and unanimously support and pass this legislation to ensure that community's health and wellbeing is protected and maintained.

Yours Sincerely

Christine Hobby