

To: [Committee, IC \(REPS\):](#)
Subject: The Telecommunications Amendment (Enhancing Community Consultation) Bill 2011 Submission
Date: Tuesday, 8 November 2011 12:01:51 AM

To: The Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Communications
P.O Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

7 November 2011

Dear Sirs,

RE: THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS AMENDMENT (ENHANCING COMMUNITY CONSULTATION) BILL SUBMISSION

I am a member of the Bardon (QLD) community who relentlessly fought Telstra for 10 months from September 2009 to July 2010. Telstra attempted to impose a high-emitting base station on top of a block of units situated within 150 m from our local primary school. What Telstra called "consultation" was merely notification of what they believed was a fait accompli. They thought they had managed to coerce a lease from the unit Body Corporate and that the community had no recourse. Unfortunately for Telstra, our community was organised and very determined. We raised \$20,000 and helped one of the unit owners prove in a court of law that the lease was invalid. Finally, Telstra had to adopt the solution the community had been asking for all along, namely the installation of three small antennae, all situated more than 300m from the school, cumulatively emitting much lower levels of EMR than originally planned.

Having been through this arduous and extremely stressful experience, I applaud Andrew Wilkie for presenting this bill. I therefore support this bill.

I would however like to see item 7 (Subparagraph 27(1)(g)(ii) of Schedule 3) further strengthened:

Proposing that any facilities must be at least 100m away from any community sensitive site is, in my opinion, proposing something impossible. The term "community sensitive site" is left wide open to interpretation. It is also very difficult for a telco to dodge such sites in large cities, as they abound.

What is much more important, since we appear doomed to exist under a perpetual blanket of electromagnetic radiation, is that the radiation level be limited to a safe minimum level everywhere. Currently, ARPANSA insist that any emissions up to the maximum level of 450microWatts/cm² are safe. Base stations usually emit anywhere up to 10 microWatts/cm². If one believes ARPANSA's recommendations, one feels very safe. Unfortunately, ARPANSA is not following world best practice and lags far behind its European counterparts in this respect.

An ever increasing number of independent researchers are aware that EMR levels above **0.1microWatts/cm²** represent a very real health risk, as they damage the DNA in our very cells. For this very reason, European cities such as those of Salzburg in Austria and Legares in Spain have already imposed an EMR limit of 0.1microWatts/cm² throughout their municipalities. Furthermore, there are currently 17 cities in France trialling this same

level. And mobile technology functions very well in all these places. How are such low levels of EMR achieved? By installing smaller facilities at closer intervals. This of course costs the industry more. Nevertheless it is completely feasible and affordable.

Increasingly, the Europeans are listening to their researchers. Increasingly, they are adopting the precautionary principle. In other words, they are protecting their citizens.

None of this is happening in Australia.

In Australia, ARPANSA is failing in its duty of care.

I would therefore recommend that EMR levels be limited to 0.1microWatts/cm² throughout our nation.

Yours sincerely,

Anna Castellano