

Angel L Lopez Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 7083

February 9, 2022

To The House Committee on Innovation, Internet, & Technology,

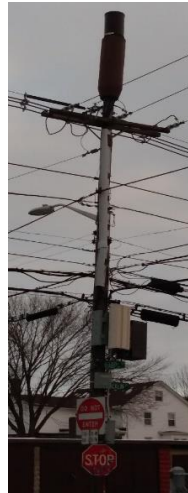
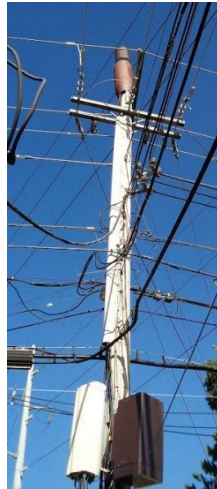
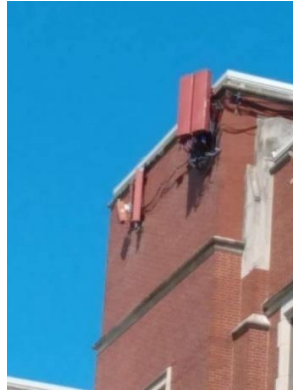
My name is Angel Lopez. I am a resident of the Silver Lake neighborhood in Providence and a small business owner. I write to you all today in opposition to House Bill 7083 The Rhode Island Broadband Development Program. The views expressed in this testimony are solely my own and intended as constructive criticism. In the current “COVID” environment, public health and fiscal responsibility are major factors that any new legislation must address. However, the bill in question fails to address these factors in the language of the bill. The first three pages that introduce the bill mention fiber or wired broadband, but the first definition on page four describe the term “broadband” as not limited to transmission over strands of fiberoptic cable.

The previous roll-out of fiberoptics, involved many of the same entities that will sit as members of the Broadband council H7083 intends to create. Where are the learnings of that previous roll-out? Are any members of this committee aware of any? The way it looks like in Providence, the previous roll-out added a lot more weight to the utility poles, causing the erection of new poles to prevent nearby leaning poles from falling. I am sure this threw off the budget a bit at the municipal levels yet there is no mention of fiscal responsibility in this bill. I foresee the same tactic in this legislation where the opinion, voices, and experiences of residents are ignored by Emergency Management, DPUC, and the RI DOT.

House Bill 7083 also fails to address the excessive number of Wireless Transmission Facilities (WTFs) collocated on utility poles that are preventing fiberoptic broadband internet from being connected directly to businesses, community centers, schools, and homes. These WTFs are energy guzzlers that are developing adverse health impacts in a City like Providence, where most residents live in the 2nd and 3rd stories of homes. I have included several photos below of what the previous broadband rollout has left behind in Providence and of recent WTF collocations. These WTFs are developing negative impacts on the public health and the fiscal management of municipal budgets of which no community deserves.



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The true functionality and reasoning of these excessive wires and WTF collocations remain unknown to the public. Emergency Management, DPUC, RI DOT, and RI Commerce Corporation will continue to ignore any inquiries from residents and business owners if the impacts of this massive technological roll-out remain uninvestigated or unmentioned in the language of this bill.

Public Health is Public Safety. Oppose House Bill 7083.

Sincerely,

Angel Lopez

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