May 24, 2018

Representative Gary Glenn
H-372 Capital Building
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

RE: Consortium opposition to SB 637. Support a balanced framework.

Greetings Representative Glenn:

Thank you for receiving testimony on SB 637 regarding the deployment of Distributive Antenna Systems (DAS)/Small Cell Wireless facilities.

We agree there should be reasonable and consistent regulation of DAS/Small Cell Wireless Facilities across our Michigan communities. This legislation, however, is missing vital conversation and compromise necessary to balance the interests of the public and private parties involved.

Communication and understanding lead to good policy and were the foundation of developing our model permitting process in partnership with several telecommunication agencies.

In early 2016, many Grand Valley Metro Council member communities received applications for DAS/small cell wireless facilities. Some were approved inadvertently under the METRO Act, some inadvertently under electrical permits, and many were denied or put on hold because it was an unknown technology.

The GVMC DAS Consortium was formed to further investigate this technology, and establish a uniform permitting process for DAS/Small Cell Wireless Facilities.

The consortium objectives were to: (1) be business friendly, (2) create regional consistency, (3) be good stewards of the ROW, (4) recognize the need for increased cellular capacity and (5) recognize our individual community nuances.

Nineteen communities financially backed this initiative, and the following communities were represented on an Ad Hoc work group: City of Kentwood, City of Wyoming, City of Coopersville, City of East Grand Rapids, Plainfield Township, Alpine Township, Cascade Township, Village of Middleville, Kent County Road Commission and the Grand Valley Metro Council. The team was strategically selected to cover a broad range of stakeholders.

To help achieve our business friendly objectives, our process brought Mobilitie, ACD and Verizon to the table to discuss their technology, and gather their input on our proposed process, documents, fees and approach. These agencies were invited because they were actively pursuing DAS/Small cell wireless installations in West Michigan.

The deliverables created by the consortium included:

- Model Ordinance for DAS/Small Cell Wireless Facilities
- Model License for DAS/Small Cell Wireless Facilities
- Guidance Sheet
- Model Fee Resolution

Since the rollout of this model process in late 2016, the consortium has grown to 24 communities. Approximately half of the consortium communities have adopted the model process, and the other half are in progress. Within the communities that have adopted the model process, there are more than 80 DAS poles or colocations that have been installed, or are in the pipeline to be installed. It should also be emphasized that, to encourage colocations, no fees are charged when new antennas are placed on an existing infrastructure.

We believe our story proves that a collaborative and consistent approach to permitting DAS/ Small Cell Wireless facilities has been achieved, which both speeds the deployment of this technology and recognizes the need for local stewardship of the public right of way.

Our local communities have significant concern with SB 637 and highly encourage you not to advance this bill to the floor -- as we have a system in place that has proven successful.

If that is not the will of the committee, we would be happy to discuss potential amendments to the bill that draw from the model process created by our consortium, which balances both public and private interests.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or would like to discuss this matter further. Additional information can be found at: www.kentwood.us/DAS

Sincerely,

Mark E. Rambo
Deputy City Administrator

CC: House Energy Policy Committee

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