



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 231

Resolution calling upon the New York City Department of Education to not enter into any contracts with wireless communication providers that allow any cellular towers, base stations or antennas on school property.

By Council Members Vallone Jr., Avella, Brewer, Fidler, Gentile, Gerson, Jackson, James, Mendez, Nelson, Recchia Jr. and Palma

Whereas, In 2003, the Chancellor of the Department of Education (DOE) put forth a proposal to utilize DOE facilities, including public schools and support and administrative facilities, as transmission sites for commercial wireless communications companies; and

Whereas, According to DOE's "Presentation on Development of Real Estate Assets for Wireless Technology," the commercial wireless companies could install base stations or other small antennas on the roof of participating schools; and

Whereas, Base stations receive and transmit radio frequency ("RF") energy; and

Whereas, According to a *Gotham Gazette* article dated May 27, 2004, cellular phones use RF energy at frequencies between 800 and 900 megahertz, which is greater than a cordless phone but less than a microwave oven frequency; and

Whereas, While the RF may not initially seem dangerous, it is the constancy of the emissions and proximity of equipment that has prompted concern among scientists, advocates and parents; and

Whereas, Most of the health studies that have been conducted regarding RF energy have been inconclusive when determining long-term health effects; and

Whereas, For example, The World Health Organization states that although it is unlikely that exposure to RF from base stations will lead to cancer, there are also gaps in knowledge that need to be filled, such as the

long-term effects of multiple base stations in a small area, before better health risk assessments about the effects of base stations can be made; and

Whereas, Due to such uncertainty, school districts across the country, including the Los Angeles Unified School District and Orange County School District in Florida, have stopped proposals to lease space on or near schools for cellular equipment use; and

Whereas, In June 2003, the Panel for Educational Policy, a 13 member board appointed by the Mayor and Borough Presidents, passed a referendum against the DOE's proposal; and

Whereas, Further, Legislation has been introduced in the New York State Senate and Assembly (S.4066/A.5648) that would prohibit wireless facilities from being constructed within 500 feet of a school, including nursery schools; and

Whereas, While the proposal would generate revenue for schools and educational programs, too many uncertainties exist as to the future health risks such cellular equipment might pose to the children of New York City; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York City Department of Education to not enter into any contracts with wireless communication providers that allow any cellular towers, base stations or antennas on school property.

JC  
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3/30/06, 11:30am