

Precautionary Statement by the Council on Wireless Technology Impacts: For Increased Regulation of Wireless Telecommunications

All persons have the right to a secure, healthy and ecologically sound environment. This right and other human rights, including civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, are universal, interdependent, and indivisible.

For more than five decades, scientific research from many nations has confirmed that non-ionizing radiation, which operates from extremely low frequency radiation into the microwave radiation range on the electromagnetic spectrum, can potentially cause harmful effects on human beings, animals and plant life at levels well below those that produce thermal heating.

This statement pertains to the effects of low microwave or radiofrequency radiation. We accept and endorse the scientists' Vienna Resolution of October 1998 that states, "biological effects from low-intensity exposures are scientifically established"; we further accept the scientist's Salzburg Resolution of June 2000 that states "there is at present evidence of no threshold for adverse health effects"; we further accept the scientist's Catania Resolution of September 2002 that states, "The weight of evidence calls for preventive strategies based on the precautionary principle"; and finally, we accept the scientist's Benevento Resolution of September 2007, that states, "more evidence has accumulated suggesting that there are adverse health effects from occupational and public exposures to electric, magnetic and electromagnetic fields, or EM, at current exposure levels" and, finally, we accept the BioInitiative Working Group Report which recommends a "biologically-based exposure limit that is protective against extremely-low frequency (power line) and radiofrequency fields which, with chronic exposure, can reasonably be presumed to result in significant impacts to health and well-being."

Sources of microwave radiation include, but are not limited to personal, mobile transmitters, broadcast antennas, wireless internet, WIMAX, whether used to transmit radio, television, or cellular communication signals, as well as, public exposures from all radar installations, both civilian or military and, emerging nanotechnology applications such as RFID.

Among the effects and disorders reported in the scientific literature along the entire spectrum of such radiofrequency radiation exposures are headaches, sleeplessness, poor concentration, memory loss, leukemia, brain tumors, and the emergence of electrical hypersensitivity as a disability. Although the chances of any one individual being adversely affected may be small, for the affected individual, the result could very well be catastrophic.

We therefore now call on the nations of the world and the people of the world to safeguard the health and safety of our global society through increased regulation of radiofrequency radiation from personal mobile transmitters, cellular and broadcast antennas and radar. We recognize and support the precautionary policies that have been adopted or are being considered by the European Environmental Agency for the European Union and many nations and cities, including the United Kingdom, Italy, Belgium, Russia, Switzerland, Salzburg, Austria, Israel and Toronto, Canada.

In the United States, since 1996, the federal telecommunications laws have attempted to preempt the authority of local governments to regulate the siting of cellular antennas on the basis of their environmental impact. In 1999, the United States Congress passed a law granting this same industry protection from all but minimal

liability for its deployment of these antennas. The U.S. maximum permissible human exposure standards are among the highest in the world. There are building pressures to "harmonize such high standards internationally to ensure continuous and comprehensive coverage.

In contrast to this course of action, protective measures should be immediately implemented through a fostering continuing, independent scientific research, through prudent avoidance of all unnecessary exposures to radiofrequency radiation, through public disclosure of the exposure conditions which presently exist, through limitations on current antenna construction, and through public environmental hearings to set lower, biologically-based exposure standards. As a precautionary measure, there should be no transmitting towers or antennas near residences, schools or hospitals. Further, wireless device use by children should be limited.

We believe there should be one unitary and well-regulated telecommunication system designed to provide wireless telecommunication services for those who want them, while at the same time protecting the public health and safety to the greatest possible degree. Any other course of action makes no sense from either engineering or a public health point of view.

We support all legal measures to institute this declaration as a matter of public policy. (Revised December 2007. Special thanks to Christopher Beaver who initiated the first version of this statement in 2000.)