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## Florida League of Cities Statement On Lawsuit Challenging Wireless Law

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The Florida League of Cities today issued a statement that the League and the cities of Fort Walton Beach, Naples and Port Orange have filed a lawsuit challenging a 2017 state law that deprives cities of their constitutional right to manage the use of taxpayer-owned property. The lawsuit was brought in Leon County against Attorney General Ashley Moody and Secretary of State Laurel Lee in their official capacities. While cities embrace 5G technology in their communities, they maintain the law should not include deep subsidies to multi-billion-dollar wireless companies paid for by taxpayers.

Under the law, wireless providers may have an all-access pass to public rights of way, including city sidewalks, and city-owned utility poles, including light poles and traffic signal poles, to place wireless antennas and large equipment boxes. Cities are basically unable to say no and have limited authority to control where the wireless equipment is placed on public property. City-owned utility poles were not intended to accommodate such equipment or to provide virtually free use of such poles by private wireless providers. The lawsuit seeks to stop this action, which could disrupt every local community in Florida. It's a shocking example of corporate greed hoisted onto taxpayers.

The law allows the wireless industry to pay only \$150/year which is about 10% or less of the fair market value for use of taxpayer-funded property. With this law, cities could lose \$25 million to \$50 million a year in revenues because they are not paid fairly. With promises of 5G wireless service that is still not available – some two years after passage, industry lobbyists were successful in preempting municipal authority, in violation of the Florida Constitution. Even if it is launched, 5G will be available only in dense, profitable urban areas and will be very expensive. The wireless industry does not need taxpayer subsidies to launch this service that only a small percentage of residents will be able to use.

The cities look forward to having a thorough judicial review of the law and having its unconstitutional, unlawful and invalid provisions struck down.

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*Founded in 1922, the Florida League of Cities is the united voice for Florida's municipal governments. Its goals are to promote local self-government and serve the needs of Florida's cities. Florida's cities are formed by their citizens and governed by their citizens. The League is founded on the belief that local self-government is the keystone of American democracy. For more information, visit [floridaleagueofcities.com](http://floridaleagueofcities.com).*