

**LATE
TESTIMONY**

SB2477

**HTH, CPN
Committee Hearing
02/13/2012**

LATE



**Testimony of Michael Bagley
Executive Director for Public Policy for
Verizon Wireless
Before the Senate Health Committee
February 13, 2012**

Chairman Green and Members of the Committee:

I'm Michael Bagley, Executive Director for Public Policy for the West Area for Verizon Wireless, and I appreciate the opportunity to briefly present testimony before the Senate Health Committee with regard to SB 2477, legislation calling for the labeling of wireless handsets for health warnings.

Verizon Wireless is proud to do business in Hawaii, a State where we have invested over \$300 million in our network over the past several years, and where we have over 300,000 customers.

We respect the Chairman's goal of wanting to see that the public is informed and has access to information relating to the use of cell phones and the issue of health, but believe that legislation is unnecessary and would have negative unintended consequences.

For one thing, labeling as proposed in the bill would have the effect of scaring the public for no reason. The health effects issue relative to wireless handsets has already been studied and fully vetted at the Federal level by qualified institutions. This has been a Federal issue and we believe should remain at the Federal level and not be left to state by state interpretations of science.

The FCC already occupies the field on this issue, and sets minimum exposure levels for handsets. Specifically, the FCC sets a minimum 1.6 standard for Specific Absorption Rate (SAR) values for handset radio frequency emissions, and all wireless handsets sold to the public fall well below this threshold. So the FCC already addresses the safety issue, and wireless handsets meet and exceed the minimum safety standard. While SAR values for radio frequency may vary by handset, all handsets on the market are well below the minimum standard set by the FCC.

Perhaps the critical issue then is whether or not there already exists a means for those in the public who have concerns or questions about cell phones and health to learn more about the issue.

I am pleased to report that there are a variety of sources for information that is available to the public. First of all, several major carriers including Verizon have information and links on its website on this issue. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) also has a great deal of information on its website, as does the wireless association, the CTIA. Additionally, there is information on the issue in the brochures included in the box for the phone when purchased in stores, information on what is known and where to go to learn more by the handset manufacturer.

Labeling handsets with a health warning just for one State would be drastic and counterproductive for several reasons. First, the peer reviewed science does not conclude a health problem with cell phones. Secondly, cell phone service providers such as Verizon Wireless do not manufacture the phones, and they are distributed nationally. It would be impractical to distribute phones with a label for just one state, and a number of phones are made by overseas manufacturers. Lastly, there would be great confusion in our retail stores, and we wouldn't want to put retail reps in the position of trying to explain the science of radio frequencies.

Making education resources available to the public is the better way to proceed, and those tools already exist.

Again, Verizon appreciates the opportunity to testify on this matter, and we respectfully ask the Chairman to give us the opportunity to work with you in addressing any concerns through a means other than legislation.

Thanks very much.