

EATON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

January 17, 2018

RESOLUTION TO OPPOSE HB 5096-5098 IN EATON COUNTY

Introduced by the Public Works and Planning Commission

Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved for the approval of the following resolution. Seconded by Commissioner Freeman.

WHEREAS, HB 5096-5098 seek to amend various local government statutes and the County Road Law in a way that would significantly reduce the ability of local governments, county road agencies, and county drain commissions to charge adequate fees, provide safe and reasonable criteria to access public jurisdictions, and collect adequate bonding should these properties be damaged and need restoration from telecommunication providers and their contractors that wish to work, install, and maintain cable, fiber optics , extended poles/ antennas, towers, and power units on public properties; and

WHEREAS, the effect of these bills would force local governments, county road agencies, public works departments, and drain commissions to subsidize telecommunications with local and Michigan Transportation funds; and

WHEREAS, as legal guardians of the public property and road right-of-way, local governments, county road agencies, and drain commissions must ensure work in their jurisdictions is performed safely, does not damage our infrastructure and meets engineering standards (above/below ground), along with federal and state requirements; and

WHEREAS, local governments and county road agencies do not profit by issuing permits, but simply recover the costs of issuing permits, making site inspections, and performing related tasks; and when the project is completed, funds should be reconciled with the permit holder; and

WHEREAS, HB 5096-5098 limit fees to \$300 per permit or \$1,00 on multiple projects; and

WHEREAS, such a “one-size-fits-all” fee does not account for the type of work planned in a rural or urban setting, nor does it consider the risks a project may pose, and in general the Bills supplant engineering-based management with a “cookie-cutter” approach that puts public resources and workers at risk; and

WHEREAS, HB 5096-5098 limit security/bonding to \$20,000 regardless of the potential risk and damage beyond that amount, rural vs. urban setting, and requires that bonds be returned within 60 days after a project is completed, even if damage is being contested; and

WHEREAS, these Bills do not take into consideration the statewide ramifications and precedent that these bills would create; and

WHEREAS, that while the telecommunications industry may be able to point to isolated instances of local obstacles, it is certainly not a statewide problem.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Eaton County Board of Commissioners opposes HB 5096-5098 and strongly urges State Representatives Brett Roberts and Tom Barrett and Senator Rick Jones to oppose HB 5096-5098 as well; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Governor Snyder, Representatives Roberts and Barrett and Senator Jones, the Michigan Association of Counties and the other 82 counties. Carried. Nays: Mulder and Spence.