In 2017, the wireless communication companies passed legislation which require certain utility and streetlight pole owners to allow wireless facilities to attach. Electric utilities’ poles are exempt from this requirement. In their urgency to deploy their 5G networks as quickly as possible throughout the state, the wireless companies have introduced proposed legislation that would allow them to install their own poles in public rights-of-way without any oversight or regulation by municipalities or counties.

As you know, electric utilities are subject to the rules and regulations governing the placement of utility poles in public rights-of-way through the guidance of the FDOT’s Utility Accommodation Manual and other applicable state and federal safety codes. This bill would exempt wireless companies from these rules and regulations and allow them to install poles virtually anywhere they want within and across ROWs.

This is very concerning given the limited amount of space on ROWs and the potential safety hazards that could accompany this free for all. In addition, there is no recourse for us to prohibit a wireless company pole from being installed in an unsafe manner or to have a pole removed to make room for electric poles to be relocated or constructed since no local authority would regulate the wireless poles.

We would like your feedback on this legislation. You can find the bill [here](http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2019/693/BillText/c2/PDF)- see page 32, lines 786 – 793. Please let me know your thoughts.