

**Senate Utilities Committee**

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**Room 548-S**

**Proponent Testimony for SB 57**

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WANRack and KwiKom communications stand in support of SB 57. One of the biggest challenges facing the telecommunications industry is how we approach the request for moving equipment including cable/fiber lines, poles, handholes, duct etc., for infrastructure projects not associated with the industry. The IKE plan, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act among others, are all tremendous investments setting up the future of our communities and the ability to easily access and move across the State. Oftentimes roadway projects, whether new construction, reconstruction, or maintenance of an existing facility, involve either temporarily or permanently relocating telecommunication equipment within the project area. Ensuring that telecommunication equipment relocation is done in a timely manner requires coordination not only by the companies, but by the local government planning the roadway project, and, oftentimes, by the contractor chosen to conduct the roadway work. Lack of effective coordination can result in costly delays and aggravation to the traveling public. As federal funding continues to pour in to assist with infrastructure needs, telecommunication companies will be asked to continue to shoulder the burden to make these projects happen.

SB 57 aims to provide a fair compromise. It will include provisions to provide funding for companies to relocate their equipment through a reimbursement process. This will help companies such as WANRack and KwiKom recoup those costs, while still being responsible for the work and staff time needed to move those facilities in a timely manner, so as not to hinder any infrastructure project. As community partners, we always want to find ways to help our communities grow and prosper. Facility relocation is certainly part of that partnership, and we do everything in our power to relocate in a timely manner.

Passing SB 57 would only further this partnership, by helping to make companies whole for work unrelated to the service they provide. It helps keep operational costs down for telecommunication companies, which benefits the county, city, political subdivisions and of course the residents and businesses we serve. This bill is a perfect compromise to a growing challenge. We stand in support of SB 57 and urge the Senate Utilities committee to report SB 57 favorable for passage.