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FROM	NAME & TITLE	Robert Cename, Budget Chief	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Finance Room 432, City Hall (410) 396-4774		
	SUBJECT	CCB 19-0406 – Franchise – Cellco Partnership, d/b/a Verizon Wireless		

TO

DATE:

The Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
Room 400, City Hall

October 18, 2019

Position: Support

The Department of Finance is herein reporting on City Council Bill 19-0406, which grants a franchise to Cellco Partnership to construct, install, maintain, repair, operate, relocate, replace, and remove small cell poles in and across certain public ways and park properties.

Background

Currently, the City has a franchise agreement in place with Crown Castle to construct, install, maintain, repair, operate, relocate, replace, and remove certain communication facilities for Small Cell wireless services. This agreement was recently amended by City Council Bill 19-0408, pending the Mayor's signature, to expand Crown Castle franchise rights to include property owned by the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks.

City Council Bill 19-0406 will allow Cellco Partnership the disposition of Communication facilities and provision of Wireless Services under the terms specified in the agreement. It also permits the Cellco Partnership to construct infrastructure for servicing these Wireless facilities in public ways and park properties where such infrastructure does not exist, the same terms provided in the agreement with Crown Castle.

This bill has been jointly introduced with City Council Bill 19-0407, which would grant a franchise agreement to New Cingular Wireless PCS.

Fiscal Analysis

The proposed agreement has no net financial impact due to a recently upheld ruling by the Federal Communications Commission, which requires jurisdictions only collect fees from companies for the costs directly incurred by the jurisdiction. The Department of Finance considers the proposed legislation to have a positive impact to the City by promoting the expansion of the Small Cells program and increase the City's technological and wireless capabilities.

Conclusion

This legislation, along with City Council Bill 19-0406, will make the City's franchise agreements with small cell distributors the same and will result in no net financial impact.

For the reasons stated above, the Department of Finance supports the passage of City Council Bill 19-0406.

cc: Henry Raymond
Matthew Stegman
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