

EDUCATION & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
OF THE
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE
MINUTES

A meeting of the Education & Information Technology Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on November 25, 2014.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. Sarah S. Anker, Chairperson
Leg. Monica Martinez, Vice Chair
Leg. Thomas Cilmi
Leg. Lou D'Amaro
Leg. Robert Trotta
Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Leg. John M. Kennedy, Jr., 12th Legislative District
Leg. Steven H. Stern, 16th Legislative District
Sarah Simpson, Assistant Counsel to the Legislature
Jason Richberg, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Robert Lipp, Director/Budget Review Office
Benny Pernice, Budget Review Office
Tom Vaughn, County Executive's Office
Phyllis Seidman, County Attorney's Office
Karen Johnson, Aide to Leg. Calarco
Michael Pitcher, Aide to Presiding Officer
Patricia Wood, Grassroots Environmental
Amy Ellis, Aide to Leg. Anker
Deborah Harris, Aide to Leg. Stern
And all other interested parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 10:00 AM

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay, we're going to begin our Education/Information Technology Committee meeting. Will you rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator D'Amaro.

SALUTATION

Please remain standing for a moment of silent meditation prayer as we think of those in our military protecting our freedom.

MOMENT OF SILENCE OBSERVED

Thank you. Okay, I want to welcome everybody here today. We have a short agenda, I believe. We do not have correspondence. We do not have public comment. We do not have a presentation. However, we do have a Tabled Resolution, **IR 1995, Providing notice of wireless technology on County property (Spencer)**. I'll make a motion to approve.

LEG. MARTINEZ:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

I have a second. Do we want to have a discussion on this?

LEG. TROTТА:

Motion to table it.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay, motion to table. Do we have a second? We don't have a second.

LEG. D'AMARO:

I'll second for discussion purposes.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. Okay, we will --

LEG. TROTТА:

Who wants to discuss first? Is there anybody here who knows about it?

LAUGHTER

LEG. CILMI:

May I ask a question?

PUBLIC PORTION

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Actually we do have Patty Wood, I'm sorry, did you -- you probably have a card. If not, Patty come on up. Environmental Grassroots Education would like to comment on this resolution. Welcome, Patty.

MS. WOOD:

You didn't think you were going to have a speaker, right? (Laughter) I really appreciate this opportunity. We are a non-profit environmental health organization. We work on issues that have impact on the general population as well as vulnerable populations. One of the issues that we are working on currently is the exposure to wireless radiation from all kinds of wireless devices including

cell phones and lap tops and iPads and routers and cellphone towers, etcetera.

Recently just earlier in this year, we started a campaign with Dr. Hugh Taylor, who is the head of Reproductive Sciences and OBGYN at Yale Medical School; also with {Daverly Davis}, former -- formerly the head of the Environmental Health Division of the National Academy of Sciences. We have also gotten quite a bit of information from other scientists who are working on this issue of wireless radiation including Joel Moskowitz, who is out at the University of Berkley -- UC Berkley; and {Mag Dehavis} the University of Trent in Canada, who is an expert; and Martha Herbert at Harvard University.

Our organization is a science-based and science-driven non-profit. And we only work with people who are working in credible institutions and working on academic research that is not government -- that is not government or industry-funded.

The issue of wireless radiation came up because of studies that Hugh Taylor had performed at Yale University showing that when pregnant mice were exposed to radiation, simple radiation from typical cellphone use, that their offspring exhibited signs of ADD, ADHD. And then on further and closer look, they actually looked at the prefrontal cortex of the brain of these offspring and found that there were major significant differences in the construction of the prefrontal cortex in the offspring that were exposed during fetal development.

This -- all of this information now has -- from various sources has become a project of ours called the Baby Safe Project, which is about basically warning pregnant women or educating pregnant women about the potential risk. And this, we feel, is something that we were -- are going to do through birthing centers and hospitals, but also in locations where there's -- there can be an opportunity to work with, like schools, UFT, the United Federation of Teachers and NYSUT, New York State United Teachers, which is the largest teachers union in the nation, is very interested in working with us. And then we thought perhaps Suffolk County, a government entity here that is -- that is very open and very interested in being educated about some of these public health issues would also be interested in just taking simple precautions for their employees by locating the -- I mean identifying the location of wireless routers in offices that are owned by Suffolk County. So that's actually the -- I think that's the premise here for the -- for this resolution that you're putting forward.

I can answer questions if you have them about wireless radiation. There are a lot of things that I can pass out to you that we have. We have a sheet on reducing wireless radiation exposure for pregnant women in the workplace.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

I wanted to mention, too, though, Pattie, that when I -- I had -- I guess I met you probably over ten years ago. And I just want to endorse your credentials. You were one of the main leaders in providing scientific research and information to New York State about pesticides and the effect of pesticides on children. And through your efforts, I believe, New York State passed a rule that, you know, there has to be notification on school property when a pesticide, especially the 2 4-d, that's the agent orange chemical, when it's being applied to schools. So I just wanted to put that on public record that your credentials are outstanding and I do appreciate you being here today.

MS. WOOD:

Thank you. Actually that -- that is the law. It is called the Child Safe Playing Fields Act and it actually prohibits any use of pesticides including 2 4-d on any school properties, kindergarten through 12th grade including public, private and parochial schools, daycares and Pre-Ks.

Okay, so you have this document in front of you. It's just a short one -- one sheet piece. And you can see that -- that we have some quotes, one from the American Academy of Pediatrics, that said that current FCC standards -- and that's -- FCC is the agency in -- in our Federal government that

actually regulates wireless technologies. And one of the problems with the FCC is that it is only looking at the thermal effects of wireless radiation; in other words, how close do I have to get to a transmitter in order to have my skin burn -- actual tissue burn. We are one of the very few nations in the country that is not also looking -- I mean nations in the world that is also not looking at the biological effects of microwave exposure.

Microwave can also be called RFR, radiofrequency radiation. And it is very similar to a -- to a microwave oven, working on the same principle. The difference between a microwave oven is that the microwaves are contained within the oven. A router actually obviously is open and the microwaves are transmitting all around us. And the microwaves -- the microwave transmitters are actually delivering pulsed radiation. Inside every single router, whether it's in your home or in your offices, has inside it antennas. And those antennas are actually putting out a beacon signal, which is -- a beacon signal is like a lighthouse. It's 360 degrees. And that signal pulses constantly. And so we have -- we have an issue in schools and in places where people are -- are in the same room for their -- for the entire workday or the school day; and especially if there are pregnant women. And the other vulnerable population that we have a real concern about is people who have implanted medical devices. Microwave radiation will actually impact the functioning of these medical devices.

So I think that what you're asking for in this resolution is very reasonable and simple; just to identify the location of these routers. Because in the world of wireless radiation proximity is everything. So if you have a pregnant woman and her desk is directly beneath a router, she can actually move her desk or, you know, switch to another desk so that she is not two feet away from the router, but 20 feet away from the router. It makes a huge difference in her exposure. And we're quite concerned about that.

And then the other thing is to do a very simple education campaign, just either on your website or, you know, somewhere, you know, where -- where your employees can have access to this information so that they can take simple precautions not only at work, but also at home, you know, as they go about their daily lives.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. I think -- we have a few questions but I also wanted to mention, you know, over 22 years ago when I had my first daughter, I was warned by my obstetrician not to sleep under an electric blanket because of the same issue -- a similar issue --

MS. WOOD:

Similar, yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

The frequencies. So, again, as we, you know, understand science more and more, we need to consider the safety factors, especially with pregnant women and children. And, again, I admire your efficacy in doing this, Pattie.

So our first speaker, Presiding Officer Gregory has a question for you.

P.O. GREGORY:

Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you for coming here today. So I imagine that you've been working with Dr. Spencer's office on this resolution?

MS. WOOD:

Yes.

P.O. GREGORY:

So this is to me more than just a notification bill. There are certain requirements, it would appear, because it's just not notifying someone that wireless is a use in the building, but you have to notify

the location of the device; right? Is that -- okay.

MS. WOOD:

The location of the device makes a big difference, as I said, because proximity is one of the most important issues that we have here when we're talking about wireless radiation. If there's a router -- let's say that red fire device there (pointing) is a wireless router and this woman sitting right here is pregnant (pointing), she would be better off sitting over there (indicating); way better off, especially if it was her desk that she sat at every single day for eight hours a day.

P.O. GREGORY:

That leads to my next question.

MS. WOOD:

Yes.

P.O. GREGORY:

Because you define the location or you point out the location, are there requirements as to -- or recommendations as to proximity to sitting close to a transmitter?

MS. WOOD:

Any distance that you can move away from a transmitter is a positive thing. It's a step in the right direction. One of the problems with radiation is that there are many factors that are involved. If there is a metal filing cabinet, for instance, right next to her desk, that metal filing cabinet will act as -- it will actually bounce those microwaves off that metal filing cabinet and onto that -- onto that person. So there are -- there are a few suggestions that we would make in an educational piece about just moving things in offices, if possible, so that there is less opportunity for constant exposure to the -- to the microwave radiation.

P.O. GREGORY:

So that leads to another question. So because of that now you're -- you're going to -- I can imagine there would be some type of office policies that will have to be instituted because of, you know, if an employee comes and says, hey, you know, there's a recommendation that sitting within ten feet of a transmitter is going to cause me bodily harm, in order to avoid liability, we have to make policies where, you know, no person will have a desk within ten feet of a transmitter and then --

MS. WOOD:

Right. Well, all we're -- all we're really trying to do is we're really trying to focus on pregnant women here. I mean a pregnant woman and that fetus that she is carrying, or the fetus that she's carrying, is the most vulnerable of all of our populations. Because that -- that child is developing rapidly. You have cell division going on at a very, very rapid pace during development. And that's when an exposure can actually cause permanent harm. And so that's really the main concern is your pregnant employees. And I think that's what the focus maybe should be in this -- you know, in this resolution.

P.O. GREGORY:

Okay. And that leads to my next and last question. So this symbol here, is that the symbol that's being recommended?

MS. WOOD:

We just put something in there just as an example.

P.O. GREGORY:

Oh, okay.

MS. WOOD:

Yeah, just as an example.

P.O. GREGORY:

All right. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Legislator Trotta has a question for you.

LEG. TROTТА:

What is your background again?

MS. WOOD:

I'm a visiting scholar at Adelphi University. I teach in the School of Nursing and Public Health.

LEG. TROTТА:

Like you're a nurse or --

MS. WOOD:

No, I'm not a nurse. I'm a -- I'm actually an educator. My background is in education. And that's primary what our organization does.

LEG. TROTТА:

I mean I've read a little bit about this. And, you know, there's wifi everywhere.

MS. WOOD:

Yes, there is.

LEG. TROTТА:

There's wifi in Starbucks. There's wifi everywhere.

MS. WOOD:

Everywhere. This is -- from our perspective, this is another example of an industry or a technology that has rolled out very fast. And the science has not been able to keep up with it. We are -- we are -- we are literally embracing this technology as the future for education, for, you know, for everything without having any kind of science as to whether or not there are some real human health risks. So we are actually quite behind other countries. There are many other countries, for instance, France and Germany and Sweden that are actually pulling wifi routers now out of public buildings, out of libraries, out of hospitals, out of schools. Because as the science emerges and they understand that there are vulnerable populations within the public, they are taking them out of public spaces.

LEG. TROTТА:

Is there any studies that show that, you know, children have been affected?

MS. WOOD:

Yes. Oh, yeah. We have -- we have lots of studies. If you go onto the site -- I was also going to hand out these pamphlets that we have produced for pregnant women that are being used at birthing centers and hospitals all over the country. And there's a lot of information in here. And if you go onto the website, which you can also find in here, you will find an entire section of the website which is just scientific documentation.

LEG. TROTТА:

I mean I was reading some things on some, like, PhDs -- who says that, you know, unless you're sitting on the thing for 12 hours, you know, it's not -- that there's no effect.

MS. WOOD:

Well, I've never seen that study.

LEG. TROTTA:

Microwave towers.

MS. WOOD:

But there is an effect. And the -- actually the military -- very interesting. The military, which were the first ones to actually use this technology, they -- they actually concluded that behavior, which is what we're talking about, the ADD and ADHD in the exposed fetuses, may be the most sensitive biological component to the RF microwave radiation issue. And that was actually produced by the US Air Force Military Command back in 1994. And then we have, you know, UCLA, Yale University, University of Washington -- I mean there's a lot of documentation that is rolling out now, not only from this country, but from other countries all over the world about the effects of wireless radiation. There's some studies that are just focusing on the ipsilateral effects of holding the cellphone close or on the head. We're seeing an increase in meningiomas and gliomas and acoustic neuroma brain tumors. We're seeing an increase in parata gland tumors which sit right below the ear, and eye cancers and thyroid cancers. All of this is documented and there are studies that are produced on all of these things.

LEG. TROTTA:

Do you carry a cellphone?

MS. WOOD:

I do not -- do not carry a cellphone, no.

LEG. TROTTA:

You don't have a cellphone?

MS. WOOD:

I do not carry a cellphone.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

She didn't answer my calls. (Laughter)

LEG. TROTTA:

I mean this -- it just seems like, you know, if what you're saying is true, and I'm not, you know, then this little sign in this building is not the answer.

MS. WOOD:

Well, it's the answer to protect the most vulnerable in our population. It's a step in the right direction. We have a lot of children today that we are spending a lot of money on in our schools who have learning disabilities or neurobehavioral problems. And this is one of the -- one of the things that we can do to perhaps prevent some of that in our population.

LEG. TROTTA:

So you're saying that these increased -- whatever -- what you're talking about, has to do with cellphones and routers?

MS. WOOD:

Yes. And laptops. And women putting their cellphones in their pockets when they're pregnant, women using their laptops and their iPads.

LEG. TROTTA:

So wouldn't it be -- I mean I would venture to say most pregnant women have a cellphone.

MS. WOOD:

Yes, they do. And we're trying to teach them how to use it safely. We're not saying don't use it. We're saying -- there are safe ways to use cellphones. There are safe ways to download movies or to stream videos and then put your computer on airplane mode where there's no risk at all. So download them and stream them somewhere else --

LEG. TROTТА:

My question is if, you know, if she's sitting there and then you move her over there (indicating) --

MS. WOOD:

It's a huge difference; huge difference in her exposure.

LEG. TROTТА:

How do you know that?

MS. WOOD:

Because you can -- because we have -- we have -- we have meters that can show you in an instant that sitting right there -- right there -- if I had a meter with me, you could see that it was -- it would be over the top. Okay. And you move over there and it would be almost insignificant.

LEG. TROTТА:

What is almost insignificant? It's still there, right?

MS. WOOD:

Yeah. There's going to be a low level. There's going to be a low level everywhere. I mean I always say to people if you could actually see wireless radiation, you would walk out of any building and you would have to go through like this (indicating). It would look like spaghetti. You know, you'd be walking through spaghetti. There's that much --

LEG. TROTТА:

But what about when they go home? Like my router's under my desk where I sit at my house.

MS. WOOD:

Under your desk?

LEG. TROTТА:

Under my desk.

MS. WOOD:

The router's under the desk? I thought they were --

LEG. TROTТА:

No, the routers are the things that Cablevision, that Verizon gives you. It's right under my desk.

MS. WOOD:

U-hum.

LEG. CILMI:

That could be a problem.

LEG. TROTТА:

I'm going to get foot cancer.

MS. WOOD:

You know, it is -- it is -- I know that it's hard to wrap your arms around this issue because it so

ubiquitous in our lives today. And there's no doubt about it. But if you look at the wireless industry itself and you read the fine print on page 37 of your manual when you buy your new I-5 or I-6 phone, you'll see that they say *do not hold this device or any other wireless device against your body*. They say that. And then the insurance companies have not insured a single wireless company for liability. Not a single one.

LEG. TROTTA:

Well, I always think of the Northport Power Plant. It's the dirtiest power plant in the country; one of them. So, you know, should we have signs when the wind's blowing from the north that it's going to come over here into Hauppauge? I mean it's horribly, horribly polluted air.

MS. WOOD:

Yes, it is. Except that that you have no control over. And that's not a constant. A router is a constant. It is in the office where your employees are working day in and day out 300 and some days a year.

LEG. TROTTA:

Okay. Thank.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Legislator D'Amaro has a question.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Hi, good morning.

MS. WOOD:

Good morning.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Well, I appreciate your -- your concern for our health. That's very admirable. And I'm a little concerned about it because I've always heard since cellphones have been available, that, you know, holding them up to the side of your head is very dangerous or could be dangerous. But I've never seen anything -- unless I'm not aware -- but I've never seen anything really conclusive that says there's a direct correlation between the use of that phone and the effects -- the health effects that are claimed to take place. And I don't have a problem with this bill, if you want to put up a sign that says there's a router over here and someone wants to make an informed decision. Because I think putting up the sign is an admission that the science is inconclusive right now.

The only issue in my mind -- or one of the issues in my mind is when you put up a sign, are you causing fear? Are you trying to help, let's say, a pregnant employee who may perhaps can move from this side of the room to that side of the room, but what about all the other employees that are still sitting next to the router? So we have to be very careful in doing something like this. Because it's not just about the pregnant employee. It's about all the employees.

So when we put up this sign, the County is taking the position that this may be harmful to your health, but nonetheless someone is going to be working in close proximity to the router. And I'm not sure that that's an appropriate solution or an appropriate message to send out to County employees.

The issue on this -- this whole wifi thing goes to intensity of a signal, in my mind. You know, there's a lot of devices that give out what could potentially be dangerous microwave radiation and other types of -- along the spectrum, the short end to the long end of the spectrum of radiation. And, you know, as a general layman's concept, radiation is harmful. And we all know that. But is it harmful at the level that we're talking about?

So, for example, what are -- you know, if you put water through a high powered jet stream, you can cut through steel or you can cut somebody in half with it. But it doesn't mean you're not going to get under the showerhead. So it's about the intensity of the radiation that's being emitted. And the science is not conclusive on that.

MS. WOOD:

The science is not conclusive on cigarette smoking either. I mean just to make you all understand that --

LEG. D'AMARO:

Oh, I'm not talking about cigarette smoking though --

MS. WOOD:

-- conclusive. I know.

LEG. D'AMARO:

We're not talking about that.

MS. WOOD:

Right. But science --

LEG. D'AMARO:

We're talking about the County putting up a sign --

MS. WOOD:

Correct.

LEG. D'AMARO:

-- telling its employees that we are engaging in a practice that is harmful to your health.

MS. WOOD:

Right.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Now unless the science is convincing enough, then, what -- how are we serving our employees by putting up that sign?

MS. WOOD:

Um, there is a very strong indication of risk. And conclusive science is something that is almost unattainable when you're talking about environmental exposures because there are so many moving parts to this -- this type of exposure. So we are really only looking at this as an issue that has -- that has proven already that there is some risk. And when you have risk, you can take protective action.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Did you know that a 100 watt light bulb gives out more radiation than a wifi device?

MS. WOOD:

I don't believe that. It's a different type of radiation.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Well, you can choose to believe what you want to believe --

MS. WOOD:

No, it's a different type of radiation.

LEG. D'AMARO:

But nonetheless it's radiation.

MS. WOOD:

It's a very different type of radiation.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right, okay, it's a different type of radiation but maybe that's harmful.

MS. WOOD:

And I would love to see where that statement came from and what the science is behind the fact that a light bulb puts out more radiation than a transmitter.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Well, you know, we don't have the time to debate --

MS. WOOD:

I don't want to debate but I would love to see that.

LEG. D'AMARO:

-- the source of my information, but frankly I don't know the source of your information other than some studies that you're citing that are inconclusive because the FCC is not investigating this.

MS. WOOD:

The FCC is run by Tom Wheeler, who is a former employee of the wireless industry.

LEG. D'AMARO:

But they're on the take.

MS. WOOD:

I don't know if they're on the take but he is --

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right.

MS. WOOD:

-- a former employer of the wireless industry.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right. But, you know, my concern again is that -- I don't know the science. I don't pretend to know it. I don't know the source of your information. You know, you can read things off the internet. I don't believe anything I read on the internet anyway, but I'm just concerned about putting up a sign -- like, for example, in my district office, okay, there is a -- there are three employees there on a regular basis. And if I put up the sign that the router may be harmful, so how do I justify having any employee there?

MS. WOOD:

There are ways to actually make that router less harmful. First of all you can move it. If you have a hallway, you can actually move that router into your hallway. There are attachments that you can actually make to the router and to each individual computer that your employees are using that gets plugged into the wall that actually removes the microwave radiation from that router. You can still power your equipment, but you can actually do that. There are ways to eliminate that exposure.

LEG. D'AMARO:

There's a plug connecting that'll eliminate the radiation?

MS. WOOD:

U-huh.

LEG. D'AMARO:

I think then rather than put up a sign saying that your County is putting you at health risk, we'd probably be better off buying that adapter.

MS. WOOD:

That's absolutely a possibility. If Suffolk County would like to do that, I can give you all the information.

LEG. D'AMARO:

All right. What level -- how intense is the energy level from a router?

MS. WOOD:

Well, it depends on the router. It differs from manufacturer to manufacturer. And it differs in the --

LEG. D'AMARO:

But you're not holding it up to your head like a cellphone.

MS. WOOD:

No, correct, you're not holding it up to your head like a cellphone.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right.

MS. WOOD:

But --

LEG. D'AMARO:

So how far away do you have to be where it's not at -- you're not at risk at all?

MS. WOOD:

It depends on how powerful the router is. Typically a commercial router is much more powerful than a router that you use in your home, where you're intending to power a couple of laptops, perhaps. In an office building or a commercial building, you're -- or a school even, this router can power up to 25 or 30 laptops simultaneously. So commercial routers are typically more powerful than a home router.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right. But my question is how far away do you have to be from a router before it becomes not harmful?

MS. WOOD:

This is -- this is --

LEG. D'AMARO:

A commercial -- I assume the County uses commercial routers so --

MS. WOOD:

I'm going to assume that they use commercial routers as well.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Yeah. So how far away would we have to have our employees?

MS. WOOD:

I would say that, you know, sitting directly underneath it, if that's the router right on your wall --

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right.

MS. WOOD:

-- that you would probably want to be, you know, 15 feet away from it if you could get that far away from it.

LEG. D'AMARO:

So after 15 feet, it's not a health risk?

MS. WOOD:

It depends on the person. If that person has a medical implant, it may be a health risk. If that person is pregnant, you know --

LEG. D'AMARO:

Well, let's say the average employee.

MS. WOOD:

The average employee. I can't give you exact numbers. You would have to have someone come in with a meter and tell you exactly where the levels actually drop off to where they think it's a safe level. But there are many people that feel like there is no safe level. There are people suffering from what we call electromagnetic hypersensitivity. And more and more people are suffering from this today than ever before.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right.

MS. WOOD:

And this is a result of constant ubiquitous exposure. And that's -- that's something that is going -- we're going to see grow as a medical condition over the next few years. I mean you may not have heard of it before, but you will certainly hear of it as time goes on as we begin to use, you know, wireless for everything. You know, in New York City we've just moved all of our public telephone booths to wireless kiosks. They're convenient but those people who are living in those apartments that are just a few feet away from those kiosks are going to be irradiated day in and day out 24/7, not only from the kiosks --

LEG. D'AMARO:

But in our daily lives, how do we avoid being irradiated?

MS. WOOD:

You make choices. We have a very high tech organization. And we're in a building with a music publishing company that has, you know, 14 computers in it. And we're entirely hardwired in that -- in that building. In other words, we use ethernet cables.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right. But there are other sources of radiation that are affecting you on a daily basis even if --

MS. WOOD:

Sure, there are cellphone towers and -- yeah, cellphone towers and routers in other buildings.

LEG. D'AMARO:

And high tension wires and all this --

MS. WOOD:

Different type of radiation, the high tension wires.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right.

MS. WOOD:

Uh-huh. We're just talking about RFR, radiofrequency or microwave radiation here.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right. Well, again, it's about the intensity of the -- of the RFR level coming --

MS. WOOD:

Not only the intensity but the spikes. You know, a microwave oven, you know, goes on and has -- first of all it's contained microwave. If you remember when they first came out with microwave ovens, they told you never to stand in front of it, even though that was actually a pretty safe use of microwaves. And it's contained in a, you know, in a -- a little, you know, box; whereas the antennas or the routers, which are antennas, are not contained and they are, you know -- they may be less powerful than a microwave oven, but they're on all the time.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right. But they're far less powerful. So the issue really is whether or not the amount of radiation that's being emitted is harmful. And you're saying that it is.

MS. WOOD:

Well, yes, there are -- there --

LEG. D'AMARO:

But I'm saying that, you know, maybe if you put your head up to it, you know, on a regular basis -- you know, I don't know whether that would be harmful, but it would seem to me that just having a router in a room and then telling employees that even though we're keeping the router, we're putting you at a health risk is an inconsistent type of message to be sending.

MS. WOOD:

Well, this is something that that, you know, you're going to have to -- you know, you're going to have to talk about because there are ways to move those routers so that not they're directly in the room. A wall, a cement block wall is a very, very good barrier for that radiation even though you can still -- even though you can still use your computers. And that'll just show you how powerful they really are.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Yeah, all right, so -- but the science is not conclusive on that.

MS. WOOD:

There is never conclusive science. And I -- I want to -- I want to actually please send you to the website. I have some of these --

LEG. D'AMARO:

No, but that -- you know -- just, you know, you have to be really careful about that. There is some science that is conclusive, but this is not conclusive. All right. I'm not talking about science in general; I'm talking about the science on what -- you know, whether or not the County is going to officially endorse this position that we agree that this router is dangerous to an employee's health. But the science that backs that up is not conclusive.

MS. WOOD:

And the science on BPA is also not conclusive.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right, but I'm not talking about BPA.

MS. WOOD:

But it's the same type of thing. It's a ubiquitous exposure. And Suffolk County actually looked at that carefully without conclusive science and made a decision to ban the use of BPA in baby bottles and sippy cups and so on.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right. But there the consumer has a choice whether to purchase that product. Here I'm bringing a County employee into a room, or several County employees, putting up a sign and telling them that we're engaging in a practice that's harmful to your health, but you have to sit here anyway. They don't really have a choice.

MS. WOOD:

I'm saying that proximity is everything. That employee can move --

LEG. D'AMARO:

What I'm saying is that the science is not conclusive. And I don't have a problem putting up the sign. But I just wonder if it just is really an effective way to approach your concern. I don't think that it is.

MS. WOOD:

Okay.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Well, and again, I think a lot of this has to do with education. Again, we can talk about -- you know, you mentioned comparing it to other health issues, and, again, we're focusing on pregnant women and children because that's what Pattie specializes in and that's hm -- there's a very important component. If you -- when they originally started testing chemicals in our society, they test it on a man; on a full grown man. And if that person was exposed either to radiation or a chemical, whatever, it was deemed safe if they didn't see a direct result of -- you know, there was an issue with that person. But the chemicals have not been tested for the most part on children. And children are developing -- we found the brain is still developing at the age of 25. So -- and especially when a baby is being formed, that's the most sensitive part of development.

So I think what -- what this particular resolution is protecting that vulnerable, living person in our society. And it's just giving them some direction. I believe there's a study in Hiroshima that they found that the people that lived there during the -- when they dropped the bomb, the radioactive bomb, some of those people did not get cancer. Meanwhile a lot of the other folks did. And what they found was the older people didn't get the cancer that the young children got. So there is a -- there's a time -- there's a time segment in our lives where we are very vulnerable to chemicals, to radiation, to forces in our environment that directly impact our health. And I think, again, if -- you know, making the society aware of those things -- you know, we could be touching chemicals right now from the carpeting, from what we're breathing. There's all kinds of things that affect us. And we have to live in the environment. And there are ways to work with them.

I think, again, what's most important is that we protect those that are vulnerable in our society and in our County. And, you know, again, I think this a -- this is a good piece of legislation that provides awareness. And, again, it's different for different people. And we're focusing on kids, we're focusing on pregnant women. And, you know, we compared it to smoking. Yeah, we haven't -- we don't have conclusive evidence that smoking is dangerous, but I think we do actually.

I think there is --

LEG. TROTTA:

We absolutely do.

MS. WOOD:

There are scientists --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

There are scientists that say there are not.

LEG. D'AMARO:

-- you have such a need to rebut everything that I say, then I'd like an opportunity to respond also.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

You can. Well I'm --

LEG. D'AMARO:

Because, you know what? You're just -- you're just -- you're just giving the opposite side of everything I just said. You're just kind of making it up as you go along. You don't have any science. The science is not conclusive.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

I will get you the --

LEG. D'AMARO:

No one would argue with the fact of protecting pregnant women and children. You're wrapping the argument in some kind of emotional stand --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

This is about --

LEG. D'AMARO:

-- that is just inappropriate to do. Because what we're talking about here is a County putting up a sign, telling its employees that we're engaging in a practice that is dangerous to your health. It's not a solution.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

You're not engaging in a --

LEG. D'AMARO:

But don't tell me about pregnant women and --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Excuse me.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Well, you excuse me. Because don't tell me about pregnant women that somehow if you don't vote to put the sign up, you're endangering pregnant women.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Do you know -- do you know what the cancer rate on Long Island -- and in my district in Suffolk County?

LEG. D'AMARO:

I am not debating that.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Do you know how many --

LEG. D'AMARO:

Why is it that if you're opposed to putting up a sign, I'm somehow endorsing the cancer rate in your district? These are not arguments. We're trying to determine whether or not we should put up a sign that's going to say to our employees there's a dangerous router in the room.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

No, it's actually notification. It's notification to pregnant women. It's dangerous in the eye of the beholder and evidently some people have their opinions, but it's just notification and it's clarifying that there's this piece --

LEG. D'AMARO:

You're completing missing my point.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Excuse me. I'm speaking.

LEG. D'AMARO:

I can agree with the science.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

(Gravel used) Excuse me, I'm the Chairwoman of this Committee. I would like to finish.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right. But you're interrupting me.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

No, I'm still speaking.

LEG. D'AMARO:

You're interrupting me.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Well, I'm the Chair and I pretty much can chair this Committee. I appreciate your patience, Lou -- excuse me, Legislator D'Amaro. But, no, what this legislation provides is guidance and understanding the impact to pregnant women and their influence on the --

LEG. D'AMARO:

It provides fear, is what it provides.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Excuse me. I am still speaking. So, no, it doesn't --

LEG. D'AMARO:

You interrupt me every -- every time I'm in the middle of a sentence you interrupt me while I'm speaking.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Well -- and I apologize. I don't mean to interrupt you.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Don't do it anymore.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

And what are you doing right now?

LEG. D'AMARO:

I'm doing exactly what you do to --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

You sound like a --

LEG. CILMI:

Can I get a word in?

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

No.

LEG. CILMI:

Please, Madam Chair?

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Not yet. I appreciate your opinion, Legislator.

LEG. D'AMARO:

I appreciate not your comments while I'm speaking. I -- constantly you're making comments.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

I thought you were -- I thought you were -- let me know when you're done speaking. Okay.

LEG. D'AMARO:

If you're going to chair the Committee, do it appropriately.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. So you're -- okay. So Legislator D'Amaro will finish speaking. He'll let me know when he's done speaking. Go ahead, Legislator. Okay, I'm going to clarify on the record that Legislator D'Amaro is done speaking. And I'm going to send this back to Mrs. Woods and she's going to clarify some of the information that we just discussed.

MS. WOOD:

I understand the conclusive science piece that you're talking about, Legislator D'Amaro. But I can tell you that there are government agencies and professionals, societies, public health organizations around the world who feel that there is enough science, even though it may not be conclusive science but enough science that we should take protective action. And those include the US EPA; the American Academy of Environmental Medicine; the National Cancer Institute; the American Academy of Pediatrics; the American Cancer Society; the National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences or NIEHS; International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is the cancer arm of the world health organization; International Commission for Electromagnetic Safety; and the European Parliament and European Environmental Agency. All of these agencies, many of which are American agencies and some of which are international agencies, have called on -- on as many, you know, organizations as possible including, you know, hospitals and schools and, you know, governmental bodies to take protective action especially for the most vulnerable.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right.

MS. WOOD:

That's all they're doing. And they're basing that on the indication of risk --

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right.

MS. WOOD:

-- which they feel is very, very strong.

LEG. D'AMARO:

I am not debating the desire to protect people --

MS. WOOD:

I know.

LEG. D'AMARO:

-- from the harmful effects. What my concern is is -- and if there's inclusive science, maybe we need to err on the side of caution. I don't -- we've done that in the past.

MS. WOOD:

Uh-hm.

LEG. D'AMARO:

What -- my issue with this is that, you know, we have to consider the impact of the methodology that we're going to use to err on the side of caution. And this bill says we're going to post a sign. And I'm just concerned that if we're putting up a sign that tells employees that we're engaging -- essentially putting you at a health risk when you come to work, I'm not sure that that's the right approach --

MS. WOOD:

Right. Which is why I think it should be narrowed so that we're just talking about pregnant employees since the fetus is the most vulnerable to this type of radiation. And I agree with you, that you don't want to set up, you know, an atmosphere of fear in the workplace, but you certainly want to, as a governmental agency or -- I mean entity that has -- that has been really on the forefront of many of these environmental health issues, just set this up so that you are protecting the most vulnerable. And the only way that you can do that is to do that in your own -- is in your own buildings, your own offices. And so that's -- that's all we're really asking for, suggesting, you know, trying to provide, you know, as much support as possible for you and to provide as much scientific information.

We do have a document with all of the science that we have to date, which we can provide to your office in particular for you to look at the science that we have so far on this issue. And, you know, that's really where we are. We feel that if we are getting the support and the encouragement to move forward with this as a public education campaign from some of the top scientists and medical doctors in our country and in our academic institutions and medical schools, we feel pretty strongly that they would not be moving forward with this unless they felt that there was considerable risk even without conclusive science on it.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Okay. I think I've made my point.

MS. WOOD:

Yeah.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay, we have another question.

And by the way I just got notification, someone has a silver Nissan Rogue in the parking lot. They've left their lights on. So if you're in the room or in this building, please go turn your lights off.

Okay, so we have Legislator Cilmi has a question for you.

LEG. CILMI:

I don't, actually. Thank you. I don't have a question for you. I appreciate your testimony.

MS. WOOD:

Shoot.

LEG. CILMI:

Sorry. But I do have a -- I do want to discuss the bill, but just not with this nice, this young lady.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. Thank you so much, Pattie. Please stick around. We may have some more questions for you.

MS. WOOD:

Uh-hm.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Actually Legislator Trotta had a question.

LEG. CILMI:

Well, can I just --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Oh -- oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Legislator Cilmi. So you just want to discuss this back and forth?

LEG. CILMI:

A little bit.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. What -- the point I was making before Pattie sat down, there was still someone here that has a question specifically for her.

LEG. CILMI:

Well, she can come backup again --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. All right.

LEG. CILMI:

-- if Legislator Trotta has another question.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay.

LEG. CILMI:

If that's okay with you.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

That's fine. Go ahead.

LEG. CILMI:

So the SECOND RESOLVE CLAUSE in this bill says "RESOLVED that the Department of Information Technology shall label all locations of wireless routers with a sign that is substantially similar to the attached exhibit A." I call your attention to exhibit A. It's an eight-and-a-half by eleven sheet of paper which says "warning, wireless technology in use." It does nothing to explain what the potential harms of wireless technology are, nor does it do anything to -- with the exception of the word "warning" I suppose, indicate that employees are somehow at risk by being near wireless technology.

I think the discussion that we're having here is probably more appropriate in the Health Committee and not in this Committee. This simply directs the Department of Information Technology to explore where there are routers -- I guess any router -- regardless of how much radiation that router may or may not emit; and put up an eight-and-a-half by eleven sheet of paper that has on it four or five words. I'm wondering did anyone attempt to do this without a resolution? Is there -- maybe I could ask through the Chair to the County Executive's Office, I know Mr. Vaughn is here --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay.

LEG. CILMI:

-- if the Administration has any objection to putting up eight-and-a-half by eleven sheets of paper on each of our routers that -- maybe we eliminate the word "warning." Because I -- you know, I see Legislator D'Amaro's point, what exactly does that mean, "warning"?

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. Can I --

LEG. CILMI:

And --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

-- let me know when you're done and I'd like to comment on that.

LEG. CILMI:

Well, I'm not really done, but I ask through the Chair if the County Executive's Office could comment on this.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Tom, you're more than welcome to come up. I also would like to comment on this. Again, there's a lot of legislation that we provide that can be done, you know, without legislation, committees and task force and things like that. But sometimes in order to get the job done and get the job done right and efficiently, it seems like Legislators have a great success when they're -- when they create the resolutions and create legislation. But, again, Tom is up here. If you'd like to comment on Legislator Cilmi's question.

LEG. CILMI:

Hi, Tom. Do we really need a resolution for this, Tom? Do we really need a resolution to put up an eight-and-a-half by eleven sheet of paper on a couple hundred routers through the County that says "wireless technology in use." (Long Pause) It's a simple yes or no question.

MR. VAUGHN:

Pardon me. No, I was just thinking about the question that you just asked. Do we really need a resolution to put up a sign? I would defer that to the legal department, but I think that we -- I agree with what the Chairwoman said, in that we do do legislation routinely to codify thoughts and procedures of the Legislature --

LEG. CILMI:

Clearly.

MR. VAUGHN:

-- and Executive Office.

LEG. CILMI:

Clearly we do. So you don't know whether or not; you'd have to defer to our legal department. Should we be deferring to our legal department as to whether or not this is even appropriate to put up a sign that says "warning - wireless technology in use"? I mean what sort of -- does that open us up to liability? And what about all the women who work in -- and I hate to even distinguish between women, men, pregnant, non-pregnant, although the speaker indicated that there's enhanced risk or additional risk to fetuses, maybe we shouldn't have any of our employees working near computers; our pregnant employees working near computers.

The fact that this says "warning", maybe it's a problem -- maybe it's a legal problem for us. I don't -- I don't -- I don't have a problem with putting up a sign on our routers that says "wireless technology in use." I don't think we should have to pass a resolution to do it. I can't believe we're spending this much time on this. I think there's inherent risk in literally everything that we do. I think with improved technology comes additional risks. And I think to believe that people don't recognize those risks or think about those risks, I think is naive. I think we all do. But where do we go here, Tom, with this word "warning"?

Maybe I can ask Counsel. The resolution says "a sign that is substantially similar to the attached exhibit." Does substantially similar require the word "warning" to be in the sign? It doesn't -- the resolution doesn't say that the sign must warn people about wireless technology in use. It just says that -- that we should put up signs that indicate there is wireless technology in use.

MS. SIMPSON:

I --

LEG. CILMI:

That it would be substantial -- that you would have to -- if the word "warning" is in the exhibit, that you would have to --

LEG. D'AMARO:

Substantially similar may go to the size of the lettering. And I think once you change the content of the message, it's not substantially similar.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. So from a legal point of view, Legislator D'Amaro, you -- your opinion would be that your eliminating the word "warning" would not disqualify a sign as being substantially similar to what's attached here.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Through the Chair, I would say that it would disqualify the sign because then it would no longer be substantially similar --

LEG. CILMI:

Okay.

LEG. D'AMARO:

-- to what you're holding in your hand.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. So, I mean maybe -- maybe we need to amend the bill to attach a different attachment that eliminates the word "warning" before we pass this.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Let me know, Legislator Cilmi, if you're done?

LEG. CILMI:

I think I'm done. I just don't -- I'd like to hear from Counsel about whether or not we should be attaching warnings to our wireless technology. I don't know legally what that means to our County in terms of the liability that it poses to us. Through the Chair, I see we do have at least one member of the County Attorney's Office here, I believe; maybe two.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay, I'll invite you to come up and speak on this. Thank you.

MS. SEIDMAN:

Phyllis Seidman from the County Attorney's Office. I think before we issue any kind of warning, whether it says "warning" or it doesn't say "warning", I really think we have to look into the science a little bit further. I know that there had been people who have come before this Committee and before the Legislature in general who've presented opinions. And I'm not making any commentary on any of the statements that were made here today, but I do think once we've, you know, exercised some debate on various subjects, we see that there's more to it than meets the eye. And I think it would be a little bit irresponsible at this point to put something forward before we really have fully vetted the science behind it.

LEG. CILMI:

So --

MS. SEIDMAN:

It could frighten employees who don't necessarily have to be frightened about something. I think there are so many things that people use in their daily lives that could be equally as harmful to them. So I don't know why this is something that's being put forth as opposed to, you know, everything else. We all know, we eat additives everyday. We -- you know -- and like I said, I'm not discounting any of the science put forth today. I just think we just need a little bit more information before we would agree.

LEG. CILMI:

Thank you for that. So that being said, I will support the tabling motion on this. By the way, let me just reiterate that I would have no problem -- although I do have a problem having to pass a law to do it, but I would have no problem if the County were to make a couple hundred photocopies of a sign that says "wireless technology in use" and placed it at our wireless routers.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. Thank you --

LEG. CILMI:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

-- Legislator Cilmi. Pattie, would you like to come up? I have a question for you. You know, we focus -- or I focussed a lot with the children issue. But, again, my dad -- my dad has an artificial valve. And he's had it for, I'd say, like 30 years. What's the issue with -- you mentioned, you know, mechanical and electrical heart implants, other types of medical devices. What's the significance with the wireless technology and those devices?

MS. WOOD:

Many of those devices actually work on wireless technology -- work with wireless technology. And the ones that regulate heartbeat, the ones that, you know, are defibrillators and so on are things that we're most concerned about. One of the speakers for the webinar for the United Federation of Teachers will be a doctor who is specializing in the impact of exposure to wireless routers and other devices and cardiac problems with those people who have those devices.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Do you have statistical data on those -- on some of the issues relating to that?

MS. WOOD:

No. This is -- this is actually relatively a new science when you consider, you know, how -- how we're using it. Like I say, it used to be used only for the military. And actually before the United States military used it, the Russian military used it. And the Russians are very much more knowledgeable about the potential health impacts of wireless radiation. They have some of the most stringent laws in the world about consumers' use of wireless technologies.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

The type of technology used at airports, is that similar or is that a different technology?

MS. WOOD:

Airports?

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

When you go through security and they say if you have a heart, you know, some device --

MS. WOOD:

Yeah. I mean -- well, they're looking at, you know, different types of scatter -- scatter back ex-rays and so on. It's a little bit different.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. So we have a motion to approve, a motion to table. Does anybody have more questions? Okay so --

MS. WOOD:

I just had one quick question.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Go ahead.

MS. WOOD:

That we -- we strongly agree that the word "warning" should not be, you know, on the sign. That was not something that we had -- had asked for. And we were -- we were really trying to make this a more narrow focus just for pregnant employees of the County.

P.O. GREGORY:

I have a question.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay, Presiding Officer Gregory.

P.O. GREGORY:

Ma'am, I know you've spoken a lot about the effects -- the potential effects on pregnant women, but the bill doesn't reference that. So you're putting forth a personal opinion as to the benefits of how a bill like this --

MS. WOOD:

When we approached Dr. Spencer's office, we had approached him to notify pregnant women who were employees of Suffolk County.

P.O. GREGORY:

What do you mean by that? Notify --

MS. WOOD:

In other words, we had -- we had -- we had a very narrow focus on this -- on this resolution. I mean, it just -- we didn't have anything to do with writing it.

P.O. GREGORY:

Oh.

MS. WOOD:

We had just came in with a suggestion that -- that it be focused on pregnant women.

P.O. GREGORY:

Okay. Even though the bill does not state that, your intentions were always -- the potential effects on pregnant women, whether stated or not, that's where you see the potential benefit.

MS. WOOD:

We see the potential benefit in -- in protecting pregnant women. We feel that, you know, as science evolves over the years, that there will be -- there will be a more clear direction to go in as far as -- as far as reducing exposures. And technology may actually even, you know, help us do that by limiting exposure. But right now as the -- as the technology -- with the technology that's available, it is felt by all of these medical people and researchers that we work with that it would be advisable to reduce exposure, you know, to pregnant women wherever possible.

P.O. GREGORY:

And you seem to know a lot about, you know, what's going on in other jurisdictions. You said -- you mentioned earlier that some are taking them out. They're going away from the transmitters. Are you aware of any --

MS. WOOD:

Moving back to -- I don't want to say back, but moving to ethernet -- ethernet connection, which is how we started, and it works really well still.

P.O. GREGORY:

Right. So are there any lawsuits that you're aware of?

MS. WOOD:

Lawsuits?

P.O. GREGORY:

Or any --

MS. WOOD:

No.

P.O. GREGORY:

No. Okay. All right, if I may -- thank you.

MS. WOOD:

You're welcome.

P.O. GREGORY:

I just have a question for Phyllis -- I forget Phyllis's last name. Through the Chair? Seidman. Hi, Phyllis. You stated earlier that -- -- loosely said made a recommendation that we should table this until -- upon further research?

MS. SEIDMAN:

That would be my suggestion.

P.O. GREGORY:

Suggestion.

MS. WOOD:

I'm not necessarily representing what the Administration would say. I think maybe Tom would agree, but, yeah, I just think, you know, we do sometimes find out later when you have, you know, another side of a story put forward that, you know, there are -- there are various issues that that -- at first glance we may have missed. You know, I think if -- you know, usually PESH would be concerned with public employees if we were doing something that was harmful to them; or maybe the Department of Labor -- the State Department of Labor would be concerned. You know, nothing like that has cropped up. And I'm not saying we have to wait for, you know, potential harm, but I'm just saying I think we need to look into the issue a little bit more before we do issue the warnings. You know, this Committee has brought up some pretty good points about, you know, potential liability for something that, you know, may not be an issue at all.

P.O. GREGORY:

Uh-hm.

MS. SEIDMAN:

But if we create it as one, it may be. And, you know, I do have to keep disclaiming and say, I really -- I know nothing about the science and I'm not disclaiming anyone's position.

P.O. GREGORY:

Right.

MS. SEIDMAN:

I just think we need to study it a little bit more before we, you know, put out an alert that could alarm people and cause them not to want to enter a building.

P.O. GREGORY:

So is that a suggestion that the sponsor look more into the science? Or that he work with your office, the County Attorney's Office, and you guys want to do your due diligence before something like this gets passed? I'm just trying to figure out where -- where your suggestion lies, you know, who's going to do the -- your point is, is there has not been enough due diligence so who's going to --

MS. SEIDMAN:

Well, you know, I think we could definitely -- we agree to speak to the sponsor.

P.O. GREGORY:

Okay.

MS. SEIDMAN:

And maybe work together.

P.O. GREGORY:

Okay. All right.

MS. SEIDMAN:

And try to -- try to see where that leads us.

P.O. GREGORY:

Okay. All right.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. I have a question; a legal question. When the County agreed to, you know, ban, you know, cigarette smoking in buildings and, you know, relating to, you know, warning people, and especially our employees, about certain chemicals, how did we go about doing that? Basically that was just a -- it's a warning?

MS. SEIDMAN:

Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

And it was created through a law.

MS. SEIDMAN:

I can't say. I know there's signage outside of buildings. And I know there are State and County laws.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Right.

MS. SEIDMAN:

And I know there are Surgeon General warnings. So, you know, there's processes that are put in place often, you know, before the sign appears. You know, there's something conclusive that -- that, you know, is the impetus for the warnings.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Mm-hm.

MS. SEIDMAN:

So, you know, while I don't think a sign that informs people of things is in anyway, you know, a negative thing, I just think before we narrow in on one thing, we should really just, you know, talk to the sponsor and just look at the science little bit.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. Legislator Trotta has a question.

LEG. TROTТА:

I just want to be clear. The County Attorney's position will be to table this, get more information, hear both sides of the story, look at the way the sign should read if we just do the sign. And it does say -- when I was reading, it says -- there's no feet. You know, it says "in close proximity." Who may be -- what is close proximity?

MS. SEIDMAN:

Yeah, see, we don't know.

LEG. TROTТА:

There's a lot of -- so what you're saying is you'd prefer to have this vetted out before we pass this?

MS. SEIDMAN:

Right. We can't --

LEG. TROTТА:

Thank you.

MS. SEIDMAN:

-- advise a department to create a sign when, you know, we don't know what we're talking about. You know, whether to table it, you know, I'm not going to put that forth. If the Administration wants to table it and request our office look into it, we'd be happy to do that.

LEG. TROTТА:

I mean I would think there would be some liability if, you know, something happens and the sign's there. And it's just --

MS. SEIDMAN:

Well, I certainly, you know, don't want to put that out there, but there's always the potential for liability when a government takes an action.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Legislator D'Amaro.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Yeah. I don't know that saying the word "warning" is an admission of liability or admission of an endorsement. It could be. I get your point and I appreciate your point. It's similar to, you know, my concern of just -- just on a practical level putting aside the legal aspect of it, you know, you go to work in the morning and now you see a new sign that says "warning", you know, you may be glowing by four o'clock this afternoon, you know, it's just -- you know, how do you react to something that wasn't there yesterday and it's there today? And you're an employee. You really don't have much choice as to whether or not you're going to be around this technology. You know, it's always a risk. You don't want to instill fear. You want to be confident in the procedures that you put in place before you go ahead and do something like that.

But with that said, I think it's also -- it could be, despite my interpretation that it would be substantially different to take the word "warning" off, I mean it's really up to us to decide that. And I think that's a subjective decision. So in the interest of trying to get some type of notification out there, I would support taking this bill out of Committee today. It doesn't mean that you shouldn't go ahead and look at the legal ramifications. You can always work with the sponsor. And if you decide or determine that this is something that has to go in another direction or there's legal ramifications, Legislator Spencer's a very capable Legislator and I'm sure you could talk to him about that. But I don't feel a need not to move the bill along today. I think that discussion can still go forward. So I would support approving this out of Committee today.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. Any more questions? All right. Jason, what do we have?

MR. RICHBERG:

We have a motion to table and a motion to approve.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay, the tabling goes first. All into tabling? Okay, in favor of tabling? Sorry.

LEG. TROTTA:

(Raised hand)

LEG. CILMI:

(Raised hand)

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Opposed?

P.O. GREGORY:

(Raised hand)

LEG. D'AMARO:

(Raised hand)

LEG. MARTINEZ:

(Raised hand)

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Abstention? Okay, the tabling fails. All in favor of approving? Opposed? Abstain?

LEG. TROTTA:

Abstain.

LEG. CILMI:

Opposed.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Motion passes. **(VOTE: 4-1-1-0. PO GREGORY INCLUDED IN VOTE. LEGISLATOR CILIMI OPPOSED. LEGISLATOR TROTTA ABSTAINED)** Okay. And add me as a cosponsor please.

I don't think we have anymore further business. This Committee is adjourned.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 11:05 AM
{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY**