



Public Advocates Office
California Public Utilities Commission
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April 17, 2019

The Honorable Jacqui Irwin
California State Assembly
State Capitol, 5119
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 523 (Irwin) – Support

Dear Assemblymember Irwin:

The Public Advocates Office is the independent consumer advocate at the California Public Utilities Commission. Our mission is to advocate for the lowest possible rates for customers of California's regulated utilities consistent with safe, reliable service levels and the state's environmental goals.

We support AB 523, as introduced, which would strengthen privacy protections for customers of telephone corporations, including wireless carriers.

This bill would require wireless carriers to obtain written consent from their customers before they share or sell a customer's real-time location information to other individuals or businesses. A recent investigation showed that wireless carriers have been selling highly-accurate, real-time customer location data to companies who resell the information to other companies without obtaining a customer's consent. We support this bill because it would help put an end to this practice and strengthen privacy protections that customers deserve.

AB 523 also would exempt wireless carriers from having to obtain written consent from customers when customer information is shared with public safety agencies during an emergency. This exemption is reasonable during an emergency situation.

We look forward to working with you on this legislation. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please don't hesitate to contact me at (415) 703-2381 or at elizabeth.echols@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Echols
Director