MyWireless.org® Applauds House Judiciary Subcommittee for Marking Up 'Cell Tax Fairness Act'

WASHINGTON, /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Wireless consumer advocacy coalition MyWireless.org has applauded the leadership of Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) and Chairman Steve Cohen (D-TN), after the House Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law successfully marked-up H.R. 1521, the bipartisan Lofgren-Franks 'Cell Tax Fairness Act.'

The bill now heads to the full committee for consideration. A Senate companion bill, S. 1192, the Wyden-Snowe 'Mobile Wireless Tax Fairness Act,' also awaits consideration by the Senate Finance Committee.

This pro-consumer measure currently enjoys broad support in the House, with 194 co-sponsors, as well as co-sponsorship from a majority of House Judiciary Members. The legislation calls for a 5-year break from all new, discriminatory state and local wireless taxes and fees for millions of American wireless consumers.

On behalf of those consumers, MyWireless.org expressed thanks to the timely leadership shown by the original sponsors of the bill, and to the subcommittee chairman for holding the mark-up, as Congress stepped up for consumers by supporting a simple measure of much-needed pocketbook relief. Wireless should remain affordable and accessible to all.

Brian Johnston, director of advocacy for MyWireless.org, said, "American consumers clearly want to prevent spiraling new, discriminatory taxes on wireless - in recent MyWireless.org national polling, 72% said they support a 5-year freeze from Congress on all new state and local wireless taxes and fees, while 89% said wireless should be taxed at the same, or lower, rate as other general goods and services are taxed. We want to thank the Chairman, the Subcommittee, and all of the bill's co-sponsors for defending wireless users across this country from more unfair, new state and local wireless taxation. We look forward to working with Chairman John Conyers (D-MI) and the full committee to soon move the bill for a vote on the House Floor."

On average, the American wireless consumer now pays more than 15% on every monthly bill in combined government taxes, fees and surcharges. That's more than double the average sales tax paid on other general goods and services. Because discriminatory, new state and local taxes and fees on wireless services are typically regressive - and significantly increase consumers' cost of service - the burden often falls especially hard on fixed-income users such as seniors, working families and small businesses.

The annual national tax burden faced by wireless consumers is approximately $21

billion dollars. Wireless has become an invaluable lifeline for millions of Americans, and in these increasingly tough and uncertain economic times, MyWireless.org calls on Congress to give American wireless users a break from excessive taxes on communicating.

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