

TESTIMONY BY ELIZABETH KELLEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR ELECTROMAGNETIC SAFETY
BEFORE THE POLICY COMMITTEE OF THE
SAN FRANCISCO COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT,
DECEMBER 14, 2009

I would like to thank the San Francisco Board of Supervisors Environment Commission and the SF Department of the Environment for conducting these hearings on the potential health risks from cell phone radiation and for inviting me to speak here today. San Francisco has already wisely adopted the Precautionary Principle by local ordinance and it is also wise for you to consider applying this principle addressing health concerns related to the use of cell phones by young people. I have been working on this issue for the past 14 years and now direct an international association of scientists and medical doctors worldwide. The scientists have for the past 12 years repeatedly called for more precaution on behalf of young people and unborn. I am submitting a copy of the Porto Alegre Resolution which was adopted following a conference in Brazil last May and scientists, medical doctors are still signing on to it worldwide. The scientists are more alarmed than ever, seeing the increase in childhood brain cancers and other emerging evidence where cell phone use may be one of the contributing cofactors to our ill rates of health. Of greatest concern was the recent report by Swedish oncologist Dr. Lennart Hardell stating if young people start using cell phones before the age of 20, there is a 5 times greater chance they may develop a brain tumor by the time they turn 30. There is evidence of genetic damage that can lead to infertility, cancer, neurological diseases, problems with delayed response time, concentration and memory problems and insomnia. Young people who carry their cell phones around in their pockets turned on or sleep with them under their pillows at night, are especially at risk. Many nations around the world are issuing warnings limiting children's use of cell phones. In April of 2009, the European Parliament called upon member nations to take more precaution, to develop biologically based exposure standards and do more research into the causes and effects of EMF and human health and the environment.

The ubiquitous cell phone serves as the surrogate for all the increased EMF exposure conditions in our daily lives. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration who is responsible for regulating cell phones as radiological device, still maintains there is no credible evidence to show there is risk but has no research money to find out. The other federal public health agencies are equally missing in action on this issue. I was one of the organizers of the recent conference on cell phone radiation and health and attended the U.S. Senate hearings held by Senators Harkin and Specter. Dr. Sigel Sadekski, the top epidemiologist in Israel who conducted a study there for the 13 country Interphone study, testified saying, "... there are red lights that point to suspicion for increased risk of brain tumors, acoustic neuroma and parotid glands. I call upon the American scientific community to join to the studies. Even if the results are not final we need to take into account that today there are more than 4 billion users including children so it is needed to

take precaution steps, to reduce the use and to increase the distance between the phone from the body and ear.”

In 2000, I consulted with Former State Senator Tom Hayden when he got a bill passed by the California Legislature. AB 1699 started out as a research bill on radiofrequency radiation, also requiring warning labels on phones. He taped up a poster to his outer office door showing brain scans of children’s brain where their developing brains were filled up to 70% by cell phone radiation. After several months of hearings, the bill passed both houses, but it had been watered down to only authorizing a review of the research. The bill was a “no money” bill but it was later dropped by the Rules Committee. This bill was highly controversial and attracted international attention as representatives from the mobile telecommunications industry world wide, showed up to testify against the bill and visit individual members. Think about how much further we would have been along in understanding how cell phone radiation can affect health, if that bill had been allowed to go into effect. Last month, U.S. appellate court decision tried to further grant immunity to the affected industries by incorporating cellular phones under the immunity protection granted to cellular antenna carriers in the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996. There is a long standing practice with the courts and the Congress granting corporations legal protections over public health protections. Last September Senator Tom Harkin held hearings on cell phone radiation and now calls for federal legislation to address the public health needs. I ask that you support that bill once it is introduced.

I invite you to attend a workshop on cell phone and safer use, designed for teens and their families to be held at the SF Main Library on January 17, 2010. We will premiere a new 6 minute video on this issue aimed at teens. This workshop is sponsored by my organization and Teens Turning Green under a grant from the California Endowment and cosponsored by the SF Library Stegner Environmental Center and the Department of the Environment. Dr. Devra Davis has graciously accepted our invitation will make a major presentation on cell phone radiation science and what we need to pay attention to, especially protecting teens, children and the unborn. I know she had wanted to be here today. For more information and to register go to <http://teencellphonesafety.eventbrite.com>.

Finally, we are racing against time here. Over 30% of California households have given up their landlines and are using cell phones and cordless phones only now. Adults are modeling cell phone use to children and children down to age 8 or less have their own. Microsoft is selling specially enabled cell phones for use in school classrooms, always on/ always connected for kids, as a chief learning tool. Over 14 U.S. states are working with the U.S. Department of Education to rapidly deploy wireless educational technologies for classroom use. Given what we now know this is not acceptable to use our children as guinea pigs. San Francisco can help head the way by adopting precautionary policies to protect children’s health, through a combined program of public education involves, limiting or banning cell phone use and WiFi services in schools and I might add, public child care facilities, libraries and other places frequented by them and to support federal legislation calling for renewed and more aggressive

oversight, research and investigative activities into cell phone radiation as the science and anecdotal information shows we are in the midst of an emerging public health crisis and this requires a full public health response.

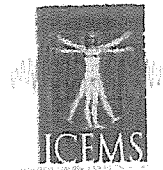
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Elizabeth Kelley, MA *International Commission on Electromagnetic Safety*

Ms Kelley has been actively engaged in international efforts to address the potentially harmful effects of electromagnetic fields (EMF) from both a health and public policy perspective for over 14 years. She holds a B.A. in social psychology from the University of California, Santa Barbara and a M.A. in Public Health Administration from the University of Southern California. Ms. Kelley worked on public health budget and program policy issues for the U.S. Department of Health Services from 1978 to 1986, initially as a U.S. Presidential Management Fellow. From 1997 to 2000, she was a leading appellant in the United States Federal court system challenging the current U.S. Federal Communications Commission human exposure guidelines. She was co-founder and first Executive Director for two U.S. based advocacy groups, the EMR Network, Inc. (www.emrnetwork.org) and the Council on Wireless Technology Impacts, Inc. (www.energyfields.org) Since 2006, she has been the Managing Director of the International Commission for Electromagnetic Safety (ICEMS), as scientific organization, headquartered in Venice, Italy (www.icems.eu). She has organized and presented at several major EMF conferences in various parts of the world, including in the U.S. Italy, Brazil and Japan. She was a lead organizer for the Expert Conference on Cell Phones and Health and chairs a working group that is preparing part of the Conference report on “public education, ambient RF exposure conditions and related issues.” She has testified on EMF policy priorities before the national legislative bodies of the United States, England and Japan. She has made several film documentaries. Her current film project is an educational video on safer cell phone use and teens. She has been interviewed on numerous radio and television programs in both the United States and Canada. She is an Associate Member with the Bioelectromagnetics Society and is an advisor to the US based EMR Network and the “National Platform Stralingscrisico’s” in the Netherlands.

Elizabeth A. Kelley MA
Managing Secretariat

International Commission
for ElectroMagnetic Safety



c/o Ente Zona Industriale di Porto Marghera
Via delle Industrie, 19, VEGA1 – Palazzo LYBRA
30175 Venezia – Marghera ITALIA

USA mail drop: P.O. Box 85699, Tucson Arizona USA 85745
www.icems.eu info@icems.eu

The Porto Alegre Resolution

We, the undersigned scientists, were honored to participate in a workshop organized by the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul and the Public Ministry of Rio Grande do Sul and sponsored by the Brazilian Health Ministry, the International Commission for Electromagnetic Safety, the Porto Alegre Environmental Council (COMAM/PA), the Rio Grande do Sul Center for Health Vigilance (CEVS/RS) and others, entitled, "International Workshop on Non-Ionizing Radiation, Health and Environment" which took place on May 18 and 19, 2009, in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

This resolution follows several international resolutions agreed to by concerned scientists and medical doctors over the past decade, including resolutions developed by the International Commission for Electromagnetic Safety [1], based on evidence and consideration on documents such as the BioInitiative Report [2] and a special issue of the journal Pathophysiology on electrical and magnetic fields, published in August 2009 [3].

We agreed that the protection of health, well-being and the environment requires immediate adoption of the Precautionary Principle, which states, "*when there are indications of possible adverse effects, though they remain uncertain, the risks from doing nothing may be far greater than the risks of taking action to control these exposures. The Precautionary Principle shifts the burden of proof from those suspecting a risk to those who discount it*", until new scientific discoveries are recognized as the only criterion for the establishment or modification of non-ionizing radiation exposure standards;

We recognize that, in Brazil as well as all over the world, where there has been an unprecedented explosion in the availability and use of non-ionizing electromagnetic fields for electrical and wireless communications technologies (mobile and cordless phones, WiFi and WIMAX networks, RFID, etc.), as well as major electrical grid and wireless broadband infrastructure changes, this assessment should inform risk management to take proper steps to protect the public from long-term, low-level exposure to extremely-low frequency as well as radiofrequency electromagnetic fields that have substantially increased in the ambient environment in recent years.

We are concerned about the body of evidence that indicates that exposure to electromagnetic fields interferes with basic human biology and may increase the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases. The exposure levels at which these effects have been observed are many times lower than the standards promulgated by the International Commission for Non-Ionizing radiation Protection (ICNIRP) [4] and the IEEE's International Committee on Electromagnetic Safety (ICES) [5]. These standards are obsolete and were derived from biological effects of short-term high intensity exposures that cause health effects by temperature elevation and nerve excitation discovered decades ago. Recent research indicates that electromagnetic fields could cause detrimental health effects even at very low levels of exposure. The ICNIRP and IEEE/ICES standards are being supported and promoted by interested parties to avoid precautionary technical planning, precautionary laws, and precautionary advice to the public.

We are deeply concerned that current uses of non-ionizing radiation for mobile phones, wireless computers and other technologies place at risk the health of children and teens, pregnant women, seniors and others who are most vulnerable due to age or disability, including a health condition known as electromagnetic hypersensitivity. We strongly recommend these precautionary practices:

1. Children under the age of 16 should not use mobile phones and cordless phones, except for emergency calls;
2. The licensing and/or use of Wi-Fi, WIMAX, or any other forms of wireless communications technology, indoors or outdoor, shall preferably not include siting or signal transmission in residences, schools, day-care centers, senior centers, hospitals or any other buildings where people spend considerable time;
3. The licensing for siting and installation of infrastructure related to electrical power and wireless broadband telecommunications, particularly, cellular telephony, Wi-Fi and WIMAX, should only be approved after open public hearings are held and approval granted with full consideration given to the need to apply the Precautionary Principle. Sensitive areas should be avoided to protect vulnerable populations;
4. Mankind shall be encouraged to continue to discover new means of harnessing non-ionizing electromagnetic energy, aiming at bringing benefits to society, through definition of new standards of human exposure, which are based on the biological realities of nature and not solely on the consideration of economic and technological needs.

We, therefore, urge all nations to join Switzerland, Italy, Belgium, Russia China, the U.S. (for the FCC standard for partial exposure of the head) and other countries and regions that have chosen to adopt a more precautionary strategy, aiming to assure more safety to the public while maintaining good service quality.

We make an urgent call to all nations to convene a panel of experts, selected from candidates recommended by civil society groups (not only those preferred by the affected industries) to discuss precautionary technology, laws and advice in order to develop policies that reconcile public health concerns with further development of wireless communications technology such as mobile phones as well as electric power transmission and distribution systems.

Citations:

- [1] ICEM's Benevento Resolution (2006) and Venice Resolution (2008)
www.icems.eu.
- [2] BioInitiative Report www.bioinitiative.org
- [3] A Special Issue of Pathophysiology on the science and public health/policy issues regarding Electromagnetic Fields was published March 2009, and is the only peer reviewed scientific journal referenced on this list. It is now available online at <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/09284680>
- [4] International Commission on Non-ionizing Radiation Protection www.icnirp.de
- [5] Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. www.ieee.org.

For further information, please contact info@icems.eu.

Signed by:

Franz Adlkofer, Prof. Dr. Med., Verum Foundation, Germany
Carl Blackman, PhD., CFB, USA
Martin Blank, PhD. Prof. Columbia Univ., USA
Devra L. Davis, PhD , MPA , Founder, Environmental Health Trust, USA
Om P. Gandhi, Sc.D. , Univ. of Utah, USA
Elizabeth Kelley, M.A., Electromagnetic Safety Alliance, USA
Michael Kundi, PhD. , Medical Univ. of Vienna, Austria
Henry Lai, PhD., Univ. of Washington, USA
Leif Salford, MD, PhD., Lund Univ., Sweden

Carlos E. C. Abrahão, M.D. , Campinas, SP, Brazil
Adilza C. Dode, M. Sc., MRE, MG, Brazil
Claudio R. Fernández, M. Sc., IFSUL, Pelotas, RS, Brazil
Robson Spinelli Gomes, Dr., MP/RJ, Brazil
Sergio Koifman, M. D., ENSP/Fiocruz, RJ, Brazil
Renato R. Lieber, Dr., UNESP, Guaratinguetá, SP, Brazil
Anaiza H. M. Miranda, Public Official, Ministerio Publica, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Ana Maria M. Marchesan, Public Official, Ministerio Publica, Rio do Sul, Brazil
Alvaro A. de Salles, Ph.D., UFRGS, RS, Brazil
Solange R. Schaffer, M.Sc., Fundacentro, SP, Brazil
Cintia Schmidt, environmental lawyer, OAB/RS, Brazil
Helio A. da Silva, Dr., UFJF, MG, Brazil
Francisco de A. Tejo, Dr. , UFCG, Pb, Brazil
Geila R. Vieira, M.D., CGVS/SMS, P. Alegre, RS, Brazil

Additional scientists signing on to the Porto Alegre Resolution after September 15, 2009:

Rodrigo Jaimes Abril, Vice Dean, Electrical Engineer, National University of Colombia, Bogota, Col.
Betânia Bussinger, M.D., Biological Effects of Non Ionizing Radiation, UFF, RJ, Brazil
Simona Carrubba, PhD, Louisiana State Univ. Health Science Center, Shreveport, La, USA.
Christos Georgiou, PhD., ICEMS, Prof. Biochemistry, University of Patras, Greece
Karl Braun-von Gladiß. Dr. med., Arzt für Allgemeinmedizin, Deutsch Evern, Germany
Yury Grigoriev, Professor, Dr. of Medical Science, Chairman of Russian National Committee on
- Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection, Moscow (Russian Federation)
Magda Havas, PhD. Prof. Environmental Science, Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada
Olle Johansson, Assoc. Prof., The Experimental. Dermatology Unit, Department of Neuroscience,
- Karolinska Institute; and Professor, The Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden
Lukas H. Margaritis, Professor of Cell Biology and Radiobiology, Athens University, Greece
L. Lloyd Morgan, Electronics Engineer (retired), USA.
Wilhelm Mosgoeller, MD, Prof. Medical University of Vienna, Austria
Jerry L. Phillips, PhD. Prof. Dir. Science Learning Ctr. Univ. Colorado, Colorado Springs, USA.
Nesrin Seyhan, PhD., ICEMS, Prof. Medical Faculty of Gazi University, Chair, Biophysics Dept.
- Turkey Rep/WHO EMF IAC, Panel member, NATO RTO, HFM, Turkey
David Servan-Schreiber, MD, PhD. Clinical Professor, Psychiatry, Univ. Pittsburgh USA

Stanislaw Smigielski, MD, ICEMS, Military Institute of Hygiene & Epidemiology, Poland
Stelios A Zinelis MD, ICEMS, Hellenic Cancer Society, Cefallonia, Greece

Other signers who are advocates, organizations or members of the general public:

City of Colwood, British Columbia, Canada
Dea Emilia Carneiro de Andrade, Sou Presidente do Comitê de Cidadania Comissão Justiça e Paz
- da Arquidiocese de Juiz de Fora – MG, Brazil
Jose Maria Tiburcio Barroso, engineer, Niteroi, RJ, Brazil
Elizabeth Barris, Director, The Peoples Initiative Foundation, USA
Elza Antonia Pereira Cunha Boiteux, Prof. Dra., Faculdade de Direito, Universidade de São Paulo, BR
Fernando Netto Boiteux, Doutor em Direito Comercial pela FADUSP, Brazil
Elaine S. A. Cabral, M. Sc., Education, Environmental Law; member, Human Rights Commission
- of Attorney Association-OAB, J. de Fora, MG, Brazil
Kerry Crofton, PhD, Health Educator, Canada
Sergio A. Pereira De Borja, Prof. Direito Constitucionala, PUC/RS e da Instituicones de Direito, UFRGS
Bill Curry, PhD. Physics, ret. Argonne National Labs, Board Member, EMR Network, USA
Frances Fox, Psychic Counselor, Florida, USA
Adamantia F. Fragopoulou, B.Sc., M.Sc., Ph.D. Candidate, EMF Bioeffects, Athens Univ. Greece
Cristiano M. Gallep, Prof. Dr., DTT, Unicamp, Brazil
Carol C. Georges, PhD. Psychologist, Italy
Margaret M. Glaser, USA
Andrew Goldsworthy BSc PhD, Lecturer in Biology (retired) Imperial College, London, UK
Alastair M Graham, EMF and Eco Consultant, South Africa
Sissel Halmøy, Principal advisor electromagnetic radiation, Norges Miljøvernforbund, Norway
Dr. Carrie Hyman, L.Ac., O.M.D, USA.
John Kristensen P. Biol., VP Technical, RETA (Responsible Electricity Transmission for Albertans),
- Alberta, Canada
Caroline Lucas MEP, Trustee of the Electromagnetic Radiation Trust, UK
Ellen Marks, Lafayette, California, USA
Zack Marks, CEO, The California Brain Tumor Association, USA
Sandi Maurer, EMF Safety Network, California, USA
Andrew Michrowski, PhD, The Planetary Association for Clean Energy, Inc., Ottawa, Canada
Luiz Roberto Santos Moraes, Professor Titular em Saneamento, Universidade Federal da
- Bahia, Brazil
Sharon Noble, C.A.U.S.E, Citizens Against UnSafe Emissions, Colwood, British Columbia Canada
Daniel Oberhausen, Prof. Physics (retired), Association PRIARTÉM, France.
Eileen O'Connor, Director, Electromagnetic Radiation Research Trust, UK
Francesca Romana Orlando, Vice Presidente di AMICA, Associazione Malattie da Intossicazione
- Cronica e/o Ambientale, Roma, Italia
Jorge Panazio, Telecommunications Engineer, MCT (retired), Brazil
Camilla Rees, ElectromagneticHealth.org, USA
Luiz Jacques Lüderitz Saldanha, Porto Alegre, RS/Brasil.
Rodrigo Borsu de Salles, Economist, Porto Alegre, Brazil
Fanny Helena Martins Salles, psychologist, public official, Prof. University of Bage, RS, Brazil.
David Saunders, Mayor, City of Colwood, Colwood, BC
Judi Shils, Search for the Cause, Teens Turning Green, Marin County, California, USA

Carmen Ruth Stangenhäus, Arquiteta MSc, Associação Brasileira de Materiais e Tecnologias -
- Não Convencionais - Rio de Janeiro - Brasil
Sarah J. Starkey, PhD. Neuroscientist, UK
Brian Stein, Chair Radiation Research Trust, Trustee E.S.-UK, Electrosensitive
Alex Swinkels, National Platform on Radiation Risks, Netherlands
Alex W. Thomas, Ph.D, CIHR University-Industry, Chair, Bioelectromagnetics, Lawson Health Research
- Institute, University of Western Ontario.
Ana Maria Daitx Valls Atz, Farmacêutica, Porto Alegre/RS, Brasil
Cesar Nicolau Vargas, Tecg^o Eletroeletrônica, Federação Nacional dos Urbanitários - FNU/CUT, Brazil
Vita de Waal - Director Foundation for GAIA, UK and main Representative for Planetary Association
- for Clean Energy to the UN Geneva
Isabel Wilke, Dipl.-Biologin, KATALYSE Institut für Angewandte Umweltforschung e.V., Köln, DE
Sandra H. Wilkinson, Hamilton Township Residents against Pennsylvania Creek Tower, PA, USA
Don Maisch, EMFacts Consultancy, Australia

To request that your name be added to this Resolution as a scientist, advocate, organization or member of the general public, we welcome you to notify ICEMS at info@icems.eu. Please indicate your name, title, affiliation, city and country (1-2 lines at most.)