

I am a 27-year-old who has been seriously concerned about the biological health effects of wireless radiation exposure for years. It deeply disturbs me that the FCC, an agency with zero health expertise, has failed to update U.S. wireless radiation exposure limits since 1996. 30 years ago, our wireless technological landscape was nothing like it is today. Given the omnipresence of wireless radiation (and EMFs more generally), it is vital that HHS prioritize pinpointing the precise biological mechanisms for harm linked to EMF exposures and how current and future technologies can be manufactured/programmed/redesigned to deliver reliable services while not endangering public health.

Time is of the essence. Every day, nearly all Americans living in developed areas experience full-body, constant exposure to EMFs and wireless radiation emitted by wireless telecommunications infrastructure, wireless routers, smart meters, smart appliances, smart wearables, cell phones, and laptops. If you can believe it, there are even “smart” diapers now! What an “advanced” time we are living in!

I have read many of the comments that have already been submitted in response to this RFI, so I want to focus my comment on a topic that, from what I have seen, has yet to be addressed: Airport body scanners that use mm-wave technology. But briefly, I have noticed that sometimes, when I drive by a cell tower, I experience a sort of buzzing sensation in my head which then manifests into brain fog. I feel validated knowing that others have had the same or similar reactions to such exposure.

While airport security is obviously very important, the safety of the screening process is, too. All day long, TSA personnel, who I have noticed are often younger individuals of child-bearing age, stand directly in front of the scanners for hours upon hours each day. They are not wearing any radiation safety gear, nor is there any barrier between them and the scanner to potentially block some of the mm-wave signals generated by the scanner. So, for every person that walks through the scanner, the TSA worker performing the scan also gets blasted with a full-body dose of mm-wave radiation. For those who decide to opt-out of being evaluated by the scanner (which I have done for the purposes of avoiding radiation exposure), I am often instructed to wait directly in front of the machine while numerous other passengers pass through until a TSA officer becomes available to conduct a pat-down. This means remaining near the scanner and being exposed to its mm-wave emissions repeatedly while trying to avoid a single scan. What is the point of offering passengers the option to opt out of scanning if the alternative may leave them standing beside an operating scanner while other people are screened? Information on the CDC’s website on the safety of airport scanners is scant. The site states as follows: “The United States uses millimeter-wave technology in airport security scans. This form of technology uses low-energy non-ionizing radiation that releases thousands of times less energy than a cell phone.” Where is the back-up data for this blanket assertion? And even if true, where is the safety data regarding cumulative exposures?

HHS must investigate these real-world exposure scenarios and ensure that claims about scanner safety are supported by transparent, independently verifiable scientific data, and assess the health implications of repeated occupational exposure for TSA personnel. Airport security and public/worker safety should never be treated as competing priorities. TSA employees and the traveling public deserve rigorous research, transparent data, and evidence-based protections that account for actual exposure conditions, including cumulative occupational exposure.

I will close my remarks with this: If thousands of people are writing to HHS saying they get headaches, tinnitus, and other troubling symptoms from exposure to wireless radiation, clearly, we have a problem with how wireless technologies are being regulated in this country. And many people may be experiencing health effects from wireless radiation exposure without realizing a potential connection due to very limited public awareness of the biological effects of EMFs and wireless radiation!

Americans should not have to sleep in their cars or bathtubs or sell their homes after a cell tower goes up near them to escape dangerous levels of wireless radiation. That is not the American Dream. It is a deeply disturbing reality that our government has a responsibility to investigate and address.

HHS has a chance here to change the course of this serious public health and environmental issue for millions of Americans who have spent years feeling ignored, dismissed, or left to fend for themselves as wireless-enabled devices expand into virtually every corner of our lives. HHS must step up, follow the science wherever it leads, and finally confront the hard questions where other agencies have fallen pathetically short for whatever reason (e.g. political pressures, regulatory inertia, industry influence, or misplaced institutional priorities). Public health must come before politics and industry interests. Period.

Thank you for your consideration of my remarks and for acting.