



September 5, 2022

Kaja Perina
Editor-in-Chief, Psychology Today
115 E. 23rd St., 9th Floor
New York, NY 10010

Dear Ms. Perina:

I am writing to provide comment on an article that was recently published in your magazine entitled "Tin Foil Hats: Tired Trope or Sign of the Times?" by Joe Pierre. I am providing my comments as a representative of a state commission that was tasked with exploring the health and environmental effects of wireless radiation, and not as a single individual.

Because the findings of that commission form the basis for my comments, I will provide a brief overview of the commission here. The commission I served on was convened through bipartisan legislation ([House Bill 522](#), 2019) that was passed by both houses of the New Hampshire legislature and signed by the Governor. The intention of the legislation was to bring together unbiased experts in fields relating to non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation to address questions and concerns about the ever-growing number of radiofrequency radiation sources. Citizens and legislators were looking for answers as to why the telecommunications industry was claiming that wireless communications radiation posed no harm at all, while a clear majority of scientists identified significant harm from exposure.

The membership of the commission that was convened in the Fall of 2019 included people with backgrounds in physics, radiofrequency engineering, electromagnetics, epidemiology, biostatistics, occupational health, toxicology, medicine (two MDs), public health policy, business, and law who were highly qualified to evaluate state-of-the-art, peer-reviewed science and interpret the findings of this research. The work of the commission took place over a year's time and entailed meetings with outside experts along with a thorough exploration of relevant peer-reviewed literature. The [final report](#) was released in November 2019. It is because of the sharp contrast between Dr. Pierre's article and the findings of the New Hampshire Commission that I am writing to you now.

As documented in the Commission's final report, the strong consensus of the commission was that wireless radiation exposure poses a significant threat to human health, which include, but are not limited to, the risk of neuropsychiatric effects. Examples of neuropsychiatric effects triggered by radiofrequency-electromagnetic fields (RF-EMF) exposure are seizures, cognitive impairment, attention deficit disorder, migraine, and may include emotional disturbances such as anxiety and depression. Exposure to RF-EMF may include sperm damage, oxidative stress, DNA damage and cancer.

This consensus finding is consistent with the testimony of all the experts who presented to the commission with only one exception, and that was from the outside expert brought in by the telecommunications industry. That expert, who was the only expert paid to present, made claims like those made by Dr. Pierre in his article, namely that non-thermal, non-ionizing radiation does not cause adverse health effects other than heat-related effects. All of the other eight experts provided evidence of the harmful biological effects of wireless radiation at non-thermal levels. From the perspective of the New Hampshire commission, Dr. Pierre's viewpoint appears to be aligned with industry and not with the majority of independent scientists who have investigated wireless radiation effects.

The findings of the New Hampshire Commission are far from being outliers. For the sake of brevity, I will not list the many scientific and medical organizations raising the alarm about wireless radiation here, but I will provide them to you if you would like to see them. Another indicator that radiation harm is real is the fact that electromagnetic sensitivity (EMS) is recognized by the Americans with Disability Act and Medicare, and has been recognized as a disability since 2002 by the US Access Board, the independent federal agency that advises the government on accommodations for the disabled. EMS has been assigned its own international medical [ICD billing codes](#) and it can have [devastating effects](#) for those who suffer from it. More a constellation of neurological and sometimes immunological symptoms, EMS is often referred to as electromagnetic hypersensitivity (EHS), as well as microwave sickness. Going back to WW II, this syndrome was referred to as radiation sickness.

Harm from non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation is recognized by the insurance industry and is considered an environmental pollutant. Almost all insurance companies list harm from wireless radiation as an [exclusion in their policies](#) and will not insure against injuries associated with it. Furthermore, cell phone manufacturers and cell tower infrastructure builders are aware that the radiation from their products may pose a significant risk and warn their shareholders accordingly.

I must admit that my opinion at the time I joined the commission was not dissimilar from Dr. Pierre's. Because I had not researched the health effects of non-ionizing radiation as part of my work, I simply assumed that the prevailing viewpoint presented by industry and the organizations controlled by industry was correct. However, once I started exploring the extensive peer-reviewed literature on health effects, it became clear that this assumption was not correct. If Dr. Pierre had delved into the peer-reviewed science I am sure that he would have been capable of writing a quite different article.

The question about why regulatory bodies such as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) are not protecting people against wireless radiation injury arose early in the New Hampshire Commission's deliberations. We invited representatives of the FCC and other government agencies to meet with us to answer our questions, but none of them took us up on our offer. An explanation for unwillingness of the FCC and others to carry out their duties in protecting the public is given in the [Harvard University report](#) entitled *Captured Agency: How the Federal Communications Commission Is Dominated by the Industries It Presumably Regulates*. The title of the report goes a long way in explaining the dynamics of the regulatory process with regards to wireless radiation, and the report itself is consistent with what our Commission found to be the case.

It is noteworthy that the Environmental Health Trust and Children's Health Defense won a [lawsuit against the Federal Communications Commission](#) (FCC) a year ago. In that ruling, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the FCC's recent reaffirmation of radio frequency emission safety guidelines dating back to 1996 was "arbitrary and capricious" in its failure to respond to scientific evidence submitted to the agency. My point is that there is a large and growing awareness about the danger of wireless radiation, an awareness that conflicts with the one-sided information presented in Dr. Pierre's article.

One of the recommendations of the New Hampshire Commission is that the public should be informed about the risks of wireless radiation exposure. There are many actions that can be taken to protect people from radiation exposure, but that will not happen until the risks are acknowledged. Unfortunately, articles like the one written by Dr. Pierre obscure those risks and provide no impetus for people to reduce their exposures. The longer that people use their wireless devices under the assumption that the radiation from them is benign, the greater will be the number of people harmed by that radiation. Facilitating the spread of information that does not accurately portray real risks, as is the case with Dr. Pierre's article, could easily be construed as a violation of the Hippocratic Oath. The information presented in the article is misleading and incomplete and has the very real potential to result in harm.

I end this letter with a positive suggestion. Your publication is highly regarded, and it has a broad reach. This provides an opportunity to bring about significant changes in your field. As an example, you might want to consider running a series of articles covering: the neuro-psychiatric effects of wireless radiation, approaches used by medical professionals to diagnose those effects, means for lowering wireless radiation exposure, and how to integrate radiation exposure issues into a counseling practice. I can assist in finding qualified individuals to address each of these issues, and I am happy to meet with you to discuss any of what is addressed above.

Sincerely

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Fulbright Distinguished Chair