



National District Attorneys Association

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October 27, 2017

Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai,

On behalf of the National District Attorneys Association (NDAA), the largest and oldest prosecutor organization representing 2,500 elected and appointed District Attorneys across the United States as well as 40,000 Assistant District Attorneys, I write to urge the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to address the use of contraband cell phones in correctional facilities that could negatively impact public safety.

Numerous examples exist where inmates, supposedly isolated from society, have used contraband cell phones from within correctional facilities to conduct further illegal activities in the communities we serve to protect. These activities include hits on individuals, arrangement of drug buys, facilitation of trafficking, and coordinating gang violence just to name a few. Witness intimidation is of particular importance, as our membership has seen an increase of harassment toward witnesses through social media and other outlets, namely through the use of cell phones.

The FCC has looked at this issue in the past, but more recently focused on it through the issuance of a Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking released on March 24, 2017. In particular, the additional notice sought stakeholder feedback on ways wireless providers can disable contraband cellphones once they become known to correctional facilities. One such method is through jamming technology, something that should be considered by the FCC.

Data collected across state prison systems shows the magnitude of the problem: roughly 4,000 contraband cell phones confiscated in South Carolina correctional facilities in 2015; around 13,000 confiscated in Georgia in 2014; and around 12,000 phones confiscated in California facilities in 2013. The numbers appear to keep rising at the expense of public safety. As Chairman, you have also expressed the desire for the FCC to further address this issue, and we strongly encourage you to do so as soon as possible.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue, and please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael O. Freeman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael O. Freeman
President

To Be the Voice of America's Prosecutors and to Support Their Efforts to Protect the Rights and Safety of the People