



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

October 24, 2017

The Honorable David Kustoff
U.S. House of Representatives
508 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Kustoff:

Thank you for your letter expressing your concerns about public safety and the exploitation of contraband cellphones in prisons.

I share your concerns about the proliferation of contraband wireless devices in prisons and the potentially devastating implications for public safety. That is why I led a field hearing in Columbia, South Carolina in April 2016 to bring together a broad group of stakeholders, including prison and state law enforcement officials and industry representatives, to discuss possible solutions to this problem. That is also why one of my first actions as Chairman was to ask my colleagues to approve new measures streamlining procedures to get contraband interdiction systems into prisons and compelling mobile service providers to negotiate in good faith with parties seeking to deploy those systems in a correctional facility. Under my leadership, the Commission also named a special ombudsperson to serve as a central point of contact on contraband device issues.

We have taken concrete steps to facilitate more expeditious deployment of interdiction systems, and there are signs that interest in these solutions is growing. More importantly, we continue our efforts to push for even better procedures and solutions for this very serious problem. Commission staff are actively engaged with state and local law enforcement and corrections officials, officials from the federal Bureau of Prisons, representatives from the Justice Department, and representatives from industry to hear their concerns, learn from their experiences, and facilitate discussions seeking effective, efficient solutions to address the problem of contraband wireless devices in prisons. Moreover, I am happy to have the Commission try to facilitate a meeting among corrections officials, representatives of major cellular providers, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation within the next 120 days and will report back to you after the meeting occurs.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Your views are very important and will be entered into the record of the proceeding and considered as part of the Commission's review. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai".

Ajit V. Pai