

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 04, 2017

Chairman Ajit Pai and Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai and Commissioner Clyburn,

We write to bring to your attention a major concern for public safety and the exploitation of contraband cell phones in prisons.

The possession and use of contraband cell phones in correctional facilities across the country continues to pose safety risks to the public, correctional staff, and inmates. Although many devices are intercepted, some make it through to inmates.

On a daily basis, contraband cell phones are used nationwide by inmates to plan attacks and intimidate victims, witnesses, and correctional staff. In addition, they are used to promote the distribution of controlled substances and weapons, further criminal enterprises, and engage in gang activity. In many states, inmate use of contraband cell phones has even cost lives.

Given the growing public safety concerns (more cell phones are seized each year), this is an issue of critical importance which requires solutions sooner rather than later.

There are some in Congress who would like to impose a solution directed by Congressional mandate. That should be done only as a last resort, given that the FCC and cellular providers have the necessary technical experience to address problems which Corrections officials, rather than Congress, can best describe, due to their first-hand, practical knowledge. It is our hope that through such a collaborative approach, a mutually agreeable solution can be reached.

To that end we are writing to request that the Federal Communications Commission facilitate a meeting with correction officials, members of the major cellular providers, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation within 120 days, and report back to Congress on actions to effectively block, or hamper, the use of contraband phones which inmates obtain.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Richard Shelby
U.S. Senator



Lindsey O. Graham
U.S. Senator

Cc: Commissioner Michael O'Rielly, Commissioner Brendan Carr, and Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel



Tim Scott
U.S. Senator



Luther Strange
U.S. Senator



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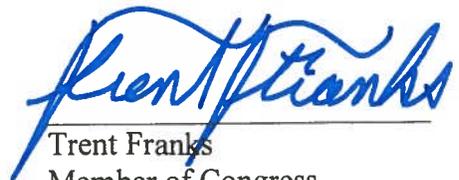
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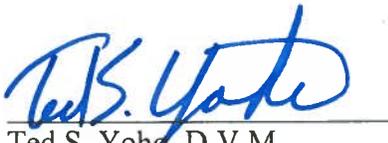


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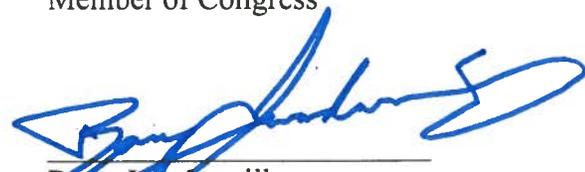

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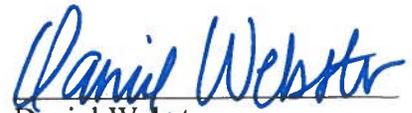

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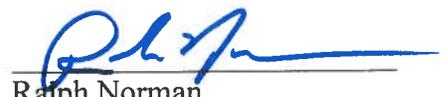

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