



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

January 5, 2021

The Honorable James Lankford  
United States Senate  
316 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Lankford:

Thank you for your recent letter expressing concerns about the problem of contraband wireless devices in correctional facilities. This issue continues to pose a serious security challenge to correctional facility administrators, law enforcement authorities, and the general public.

The Commission remains committed to facilitating lawful technological solutions that combat contraband use while protecting legitimate communications. As highlighted in your letter, the Commission's budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2021 reaffirms our goal to take steps to propose new rules or facilitate voluntary solutions to reduce the use of contraband cellphones in correctional facilities.

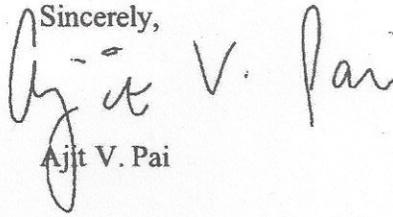
In this regard, the Commission recently released a public notice seeking comment from all stakeholders to further develop the record in this ongoing proceeding. Comments on the Commission's public notice were due on September 16, and replies were due October 1. We are currently reviewing the extensive record to assess appropriate next steps to facilitate cost effective solutions.

I would like to thank you for your recommendation that the FCC adopt a rules-based approach to cellphone disabling; this is a potential solution that the Commission raised most recently in the 2017 Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and we received substantial input on this issue in response to our recent public notice for further consideration.

In addition, as discussed in my recent testimony before the Senate Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, I continue to believe that evolved managed access systems (MAS Evolved) can be a promising solution. We are committed to facilitating stakeholder efforts to successfully deploy this solution where feasible. I share your concerns regarding the challenges surrounding the development and successful deployment of lawful, cost-effective solutions, and the FCC is committed to continue working with other federal and state agencies to address these challenges.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A" and a distinct "V".

Ajit V. Pai