



OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN BRENDAN CARR

Carr Joins Federal and State Leaders in Arkansas to Unveil FCC Plan for Allowing Prisons to Jam Contraband Cellphones

Senator Cotton, Governor Huckabee Sanders, and Law Enforcement Officials Join Carr

LITTLE ROCK, September 5, 2025—After visiting a supermax prison in Arkansas this morning, FCC Chairman Brendan Carr announced that the FCC will be voting this month on a proposal that, for the first time, would allow prisons to jam contraband cellphones. Prior to the announcement, Chairman Carr joined Senator Tom Cotton, Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders, Arkansas Attorney General Tim Griffin, and other public safety leaders, including the National Sheriff's Association, for a roundtable discussion in Little Rock on the threats that contraband cellphones pose to public safety officials and the general public. Indeed, thousands of contraband cellphones have poured into prisons across the country and inmates have been using them to call in hits, coordinate violent gang activity, and aid criminal enterprises.

Chairman Carr issued the following statement:

“President Trump is restoring law and order. He is putting the safety of law abiding Americans first. That is why I am pleased to announce that the FCC will vote, for the first time ever, on allowing prisons to jam contraband cellphones. For years, thousands upon thousands of contraband cellphones have been pouring into prisons, and some of the worst possible offenders have been using them to order hits, coordinate violent gang activity, and aid criminal enterprises. While the FCC has authorized a range of solutions in the past, it has stopped short of allowing jamming. It is time to empower law enforcement to put additional solutions in place—including jamming. I would like to thank the leadership of the great state of Arkansas for hosting us today and for the leadership you have shown in working to eliminate this pressing threat to public safety.”

Senator Tom Cotton issued the following statement:

“Today’s tour of Varner Prison in Arkansas reaffirmed what we’ve long known—contraband cellphones are a real and ongoing problem in our correctional system. These phones are a security risk that allow criminals to coordinate crimes while sitting behind bars. I’m grateful to Chairman Carr, Attorney General Griffin, and Governor Sanders for their participation and their partnership on this issue. The Trump administration is committed to stopping violent crime and I applaud Chairman Carr’s announcement that the FCC will soon vote on a proposal to give our prisons the ability to jam contraband cellphones for the first time. Congress should follow their lead and codify this proposal by immediately passing the Cellphone Jamming Reform Act of 2025.”

Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders issued the following statement:

“Public safety is government’s first priority, and the evidence clearly shows that contraband cell phones pose a direct threat to Arkansans’ security. President Trump is restoring order and delivering on his promises to the American people by empowering the men and women of law enforcement to do what they selflessly signed up to do – protect and serve. I am grateful for President Trump, Senator

Cotton, and Chairman Carr’s leadership on this issue at the federal level, as well as Attorney General Griffin’s leadership here in our state. Together, we will hold criminals accountable and protect Arkansans.”

Arkansas Attorney General Tim Griffin issued the following statement:

“Earlier today, Senator Tom Cotton, Chairman Brendan Carr, and I toured the Varner Unit of the Arkansas Department of Corrections to see firsthand how cellphone jamming in prisons would benefit Arkansas, and what we saw was alarming. Varner staff showed us the collection of contraband cellphones that have been confiscated. After our visit to Varner, I joined Senator Cotton, Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders, Chairman Carr, Lindsay Wallace, Secretary of the Arkansas Department of Corrections, and other public safety leaders for a roundtable meeting at my office to discuss the threat that contraband cellphones pose to correctional officers and the general public. Thousands of contraband cellphones have poured into prisons across the country, and inmates have been using them to plan further criminal activity, including assault, murder, and aiding criminal enterprises. I applaud Chairman Carr and the FCC for moving forward with a rule that would allow correctional facilities to use jamming solutions to combat contraband cellphones, and I appreciate the leadership of Senator Cotton and Congressman David Kustoff (R-Tennessee) on this issue. This is an obvious problem with an obvious solution, and it’s time to get this done.”

Additional Background Information:

Correctional facilities across the United States continue to be plagued by an influx of contraband cell phones that threaten the safety of prison officials and employees, the prison population, and members of the general public. Despite numerous efforts over the past decade to implement technologies to prevent contraband cellphone use, the problem persists. Indeed, one 2024 study found that prison authorities recovered more than 25,000 cell phones in one year alone. Two of the participating facilities reported recovering more than 6,000 cell phones each.

Given the breadth of the problem, corrections officials continue to seek authority to leverage additional tools in this ongoing battle, including jamming solutions. Earlier this year, a bipartisan coalition of state attorneys general sent [a letter](#) to congressional leaders supporting federal legislation like Senator Cotton’s bill, S. 1137, the Cellphone Jamming Reform Act, reiterating the severity of the problem.

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, which will be circulated to FCC Commissioners next week and voted on during the September 30th FCC Open Meeting, proposes an authorization framework that would facilitate cooperation between departments of correction and wireless carriers to implement targeted jamming solutions, while preventing harmful interference to wireless carrier networks, and in particular, wireless devices of Americans who live, work, and travel near prisons. The FCC will seek public input on technical protections that might achieve this balance.

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