

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER ANNA M. GOMEZ**

Re: *Promoting Technological Solutions to Combat Contraband Wireless Device Use in Correctional Facilities*, GN Docket No. 13-111, Third Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (September 30, 2025)

This Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) seeks to address a worthy and important policy goal – combating criminal activity aided by contraband phones in correctional facilities. I support our work advancing this goal, but the manner in which we propose to further this goal today, gives me concern.

The Communications Act of 1934 expressly prohibits any person from interfering with authorized communications signals.¹ In alignment with this prohibition, and since our inception, the FCC has prohibited the interfering and blocking of communications signals, also known as jamming. Jamming prevents your phone from making a call, sending a text, or reaching the Internet.

For the last 90 years, the FCC has prohibited the practice of jamming by non-federal actors and even prohibited jamming equipment to be introduced into the American market. Selling, advertising, shipping, distributing, or importing jammers is currently prohibited and we take enforcement action against parties that use these devices. That is because jamming devices can prevent you from completing 9-1-1 and emergency calls; can interfere with communications networks used by fire, police, and other public safety entities; and can block general daily wireless communications.²

Today's notice proposes to allow correctional facilities to use jammers to block communications from contraband phones. While the problem we are trying to address is of critical importance, I worry about the potential unintended consequences of permitting jamming by non-federal actors and permitting jamming equipment to formally enter the American market.

In addition to the inherent risk of blocking lawful and emergency communications, we have already seen bad actors use Wi-Fi jammers to disrupt security systems, security cameras, and cellphones to facilitate unauthorized entry and burglaries at homes and stores.³ Jamming poses such a risk that several states recently passed laws or are currently considering laws to curtail this activity. For example, Indiana passed a law explicitly banning radio jammers and increasing penalties for their use.⁴ California proposed criminalizing not only use but also manufacture, import, and marketing of jammers.⁵ New York

¹ 47 U.S.C. § 333.

² FCC, *Cell Phone and GPS Jamming*, <https://www.fcc.gov/general/cell-phone-and-gps-jamming> (last visited Sept. 30, 2025).

³ Gabriela Vidal, *Colorado residents take precautions after Wi-Fi jammers used in Highlands Ranch burglaries* (Mar. 13, 2025), <https://www.cbsnews.com/colorado/news/colorado-residents-precautions-wi-fi-jammers-alarm-systems-used-highlands-ranch-burglaries/>; Kyle Morel & Lori Comstock, *North Jersey police issued warning about Wi-Fi jammers. How concerned should you be?* (June 24, 2024), <https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/crime/2024/06/24/wi-fi-jammer-burglary-makes-headlines-in-nj-how-prevalent-is-it/74096516007/?gnt-cfr=1&gca-cat=p&gca-uir=true&gca-epti=z119053e007600v119053b00xxxxd11xx65&gca-ft=162&gca-ds=sophi>; Julia Daye, *How Thieves Are Using Wi-Fi Jammers to Break Into Homes* (Mar. 6, 2024), <https://www.govtech.com/public-safety/how-thieves-are-using-wi-fi-jammers-to-break-into-homes>.

⁴ Matthew Gocken, *Gov. Braun ceremonially signs bill co-sponsored by Rep. Sweet banning signal jamming devices* (Sept. 9, 2025), <https://www.indianahouserpublicans.com/news/press-releases/gov.-braun-ceremonially-signs-bill-co-sponsored-by-rep.-sweet-banning-signal-jamming-devices/>.

⁵ Committee on Public Safety, SB 701 (Mar. 24, 2025), <https://trackbill.com/s3/bills/CA/2025/SB/701/analyses/senate-public-safety.pdf>.

introduced a bill that would elevate possession of a jammer to a felony,⁶ and Florida has statutes that prohibit knowingly obstructing emergency and volunteer radio communications, a protection for first responders.⁷

Jamming equipment in the hands of bad actors can facilitate nefarious uses that pose far too great a risk to the public. Today's proposal demands that we proceed cautiously, aided by the knowledge of experience. That is why I proposed to the Chair that we first begin with a pilot program.

A pilot program would allow us to test the real-world consequences of permitting jamming, even in this narrow scenario. Jamming, if not properly engineered, implemented, and maintained, has the potential to cause harmful interference to legitimate communications, including public safety and emergency services. A pilot program would allow us to learn about what happens to lawful communications around a correctional facility using jammers, especially when the facility is in a populated urban area? Could a lawful call to 9-1-1 be blocked simply because the caller was too close to a jammer operating at a jail? Would homes near correctional facilities experience disruptions in service? We must proceed carefully so as to not inadvertently block lawful communications. A pilot program would give us invaluable insight to the challenges of authorizing jamming so that we get it right and keep the public safe.

I am grateful that the Chair heard my concerns and included a new section in the notice asking for comments on the merits and setbacks of conducting a limited pilot program. Testing out how jamming would operate in the real world is critical to ensuring the safety of the public before we extend this practice across the United States. I am also glad to see that we included questions about how the public can report interruptions in service when their lawful communications may have been affected by a jamming device. In that regard, I think our consumer complaints portal can offer recourse to consumers experiencing service interruptions.

I look forward to seeing the record develop.

⁶ S. 1039, Reg. Sess. (N.Y. 2025), <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2025/S1039>.

⁷ Fla. Stat. Sec. 843.165 (2024), <https://www.flsenate.gov/Laws/Statutes/2024/0843.165>.