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For Immediate Release

STATEMENT OF FCC COMMISSIONER AJIT PAI
On Need for FCC to Take Immediate Action to Combat Contraband Cellphones

WASHINGTON, June 22, 2016.—Yesterday, a North Carolina jury convicted a prison inmate of orchestrating the kidnapping of his prosecutor’s father by using a contraband cellphone. Kevin Melton, a leader in the United Bloods Nation gang, coordinated the abduction by sending more than 120 text messages and placing numerous phone calls to gang members from the Polk Correctional Institution in Butner, North Carolina. The prosecutor’s father was snatched from his home in Wake Forest and spirited away to an apartment in Atlanta. There, he was tied to a chair, imprisoned in a closet for four days, and beaten by his captors. Luckily, law enforcement rescued him before the order to execute him could be carried out.

This horrific incident is just one example of how innocent Americans across our country are being victimized by prison inmates using contraband cellphones. And it highlights the need for the FCC to take immediate action to combat this problem.

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).