



Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

January 2, 2009

Mr. Devon Brown
Director
District of Columbia Department of Corrections
1923 Vermont Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

DA 09-3

Dear Mr. Brown:

The Commission has received your letter requesting “authorization for the District of Columbia Department of Corrections to host a demonstration of equipment designed to block wireless telephone calls by prisoners.”¹ You state that the equipment was developed by CellAntenna Corporation and is “scheduled to be exhibited on January 8, 2009, at the D.C. Jail at 1901 D Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.”² In support of the request, you explain that “contraband cell phones are a major security risk within correctional settings” and that “prison and jail systems across the country are confiscating these devices at an alarming rate.”³ In addition, you state that “cell phones are used by inmates to engage in highly pernicious behavior such as the intimidation of witnesses, coordination of escapes, and the conducting of criminal enterprises.”⁴

We agree that the proposed demonstration of equipment designed to prevent prisoners’ unauthorized wireless telecommunications will benefit public safety. Consistent with your representation that the proposed demonstration “can be limited to a jail or prison facility without interruption to other cell phones or lines of communication outside of correctional walls,”⁵ we find that the proposed demonstration will be narrowly tailored to limit impact on authorized wireless operations, while maximizing public safety benefits. Accordingly, we hereby grant, on our own motion, special temporary authority to the District of Columbia Department of Corrections to conduct a demonstration of CellAntenna Corporation’s directional jamming equipment to be held on January 8, 2009, from 11:30 a.m. to approximately 1 p.m. at the D.C. Jail located at 1901 D Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003. Actual demonstration of such equipment is not to exceed 30 minutes in duration within this time frame. We require that the demonstration leave unaffected authorized wireless communications transmitted on (1) mobile handsets and base stations outside the established test area at the D.C. Jail facilities located at 1901 D Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003; and (2) mobile handsets operating on non-blocked frequency bands used by the D.C. Jail staff performing their official duties within the D.C. Jail.

¹ Letter from Devon Brown, Director, District of Columbia Department of Corrections, to Kevin Martin, Chairman, Federal Communications Commission at 1 (Dec. 16, 2008) (“DOC Letter”).

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

This action is taken under delegated authority pursuant to Sections 0.131 and 0.331 of the Commission's Rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 0.131, 0.331.

Sincerely,

Joel D. Taubenblatt
Deputy Chief
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau