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Attorney General Griffin Co-Leads Challenge to Federal Rule That Would Reduce Monitoring of Prisoners' Calls

Griffin: 'Without proper security measures, what would stop inmates from conducting criminal operations over the phone?'

LITTLE ROCK – Attorney General Tim Griffin today issued the following statement after he and Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita filed a lawsuit on behalf of Arkansas, Indiana, and 12 other state attorneys general challenging the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) new rule that regulates phone service providers in prisons:

“The FCC can't dictate to Arkansas prisons how they negotiate cost-sharing agreements with service providers, and it can't arbitrarily and capriciously pre-empt state laws regulating prison operations. Funds derived from inmate phone use go toward covering needed security measures. Without proper security measures, what would stop inmates from conducting criminal operations over the phone? The FCC's regulations are disconnected from the economic and practical reality of providing communication services to inmates, and they exceed the FCC's statutory authority.

“If these regulations go into effect, no one will benefit because prisons won't be able to provide adequate security for phone calls prisoners make, and prisons may simply discontinue existing communication services, which means inmates won't be able to make calls at all.”

Prisons negotiate contracts with communications service providers based on rate caps set by the FCC and use their portion of the revenue from these contracts to fund security measures and services that benefit inmates, including access to online legal libraries and remote religious services. The FCC's new rule drastically reduces the rate caps, thereby making it nearly impossible for prisons to continue to invest in security measures to monitor calls.

Joining Griffin and Rokita on the lawsuit were the attorneys general of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Missouri, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, and Virginia.

To read a copy of the complaint, [click here](#).

About Attorney General Tim Griffin

Tim Griffin was sworn in as the 57th Attorney General of Arkansas on January 10, 2023, having previously served as the state's 20th Lieutenant Governor from 2015-2023. From 2011-2015, Griffin served as the 24th representative of Arkansas's Second Congressional District, where he served on the House Committee on Ways and Means, House Armed Services Committee, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, House Committee on Ethics and House Committee on the Judiciary while also serving as a Deputy Whip for the Majority.

Griffin has served as an officer in the U.S. Army Reserve Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps for more than 28 years and currently holds the rank of colonel. In 2005, Griffin was mobilized to active duty as an Army prosecutor at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and served with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in Mosul, Iraq.

He is currently serving as the Commander of the 2d Legal Operations Detachment in New Orleans, Louisiana. His previous assignments include serving as the Commander of the 134th Legal Operations Detachment at Fort Liberty (née Bragg), North Carolina, and as a Senior Legislative Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness at the Pentagon. Griffin earned a master's degree in strategic studies as a Distinguished Honor Graduate from the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

Griffin also served as U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas, and Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Political Affairs for President George W. Bush; Special Assistant to Assistant Attorney General Michael Chertoff, Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice; Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Arkansas; Senior Investigative Counsel, Government Reform and Oversight Committee, U.S. House of

Representatives; and Associate Independent Counsel, Office of Independent Counsel David M. Barrett, In re: HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros.

Griffin is a graduate of Magnolia High School, Hendrix College in Conway, and Tulane Law School in New Orleans. He attended graduate school at Oxford University. He is admitted to practice law in Arkansas (active) and Louisiana (inactive). Griffin lives in Little Rock with his wife, Elizabeth, a Camden native, and their three children.

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