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Marshall Joins 21-State Push to Give Law Enforcement Authority to Stop Drone Contraband Before It Reaches Prison Walls

(Montgomery, Ala) – Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall has urged federal officials to work with state and local authorities to combat the alarming rise of criminals using drones to deliver narcotics, weapons, cell phones, and other contraband into prisons. Drones have become a major public safety threat impacting correctional facilities across the country and are fueling broader crime both inside and outside of prison walls.

Under current federal law, only a narrow set of federal agencies are authorized to detect, track and mitigate the risk of unauthorized drones. As a result, correctional officials on the front lines often lack the legal authority and the necessary tools to intervene in real time. To address this gap, Attorney General Marshall and 20 other attorneys general are asking the Trump administration to provide state and local law enforcement officials the authority to disable or intercept drones before they reach prisons.

"Criminals have found a way to turn the skies above our prisons into a smuggling route, delivering drugs, weapons, and phones past the fence line while our officers watch with their hands tied by federal law. That has to change," Attorney General Steve Marshall said. "We're asking the Trump administration to give state and local law enforcement the clear legal authority they need to intercept these threats before they land."

In a letter sent to Dr. Sebastian Gorka, Deputy Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Counter Terrorism, the attorneys general commend the administration's creation of the Task Force to Restore American Airspace Sovereignty. They also underscore the sharp increase in drone drops over prison grounds. In February, there were at least two different instances where individuals were arrested after allegedly attempting to use a drone to deliver marijuana and contraband into prisons in the state.

As stated in the letter, this illegal activity "is happening all over the country and the consequences are severe. The introduction of drugs contributes to addiction, violence, and overdose incidents. Smuggled weapons heighten the risk of assaults and coordinated acts of violence. Contraband cell phones enable incarcerated individuals to continue criminal enterprises, including fraud schemes, witness intimidation, and violent crime."

The attorneys general request that the Task Force, led by Dr. Gorka, work with federal agencies to grant carefully defined authority for state and local law enforcement officers to address this threat quickly and efficiently. They also recommend continued collaboration with federal partners to investigate and prosecute those who use drones to introduce contraband into correctional facilities.

In addition to Alabama, the attorneys general of the following states joined the Georgia-led letter: Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri,

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Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and West Virginia.

[Find a copy of the letter here.](#)