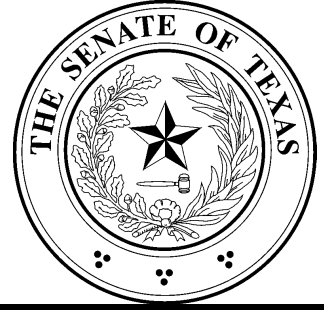


SENATOR
JOHN WHITMIRE
DISTRICT 15
NEWS RELEASE



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Whitmire Called to Testify on Federal Cell Phone Jamming Legislation

AUSTIN, Texas -- At the request of U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, State Senator John Whitmire (D-Houston) will be in Washington, D.C. this week to express his support of Senator Hutchison's legislation allowing the jamming of cell phone signals within prison facilities.

In October, 2008, Senator Whitmire received numerous calls from a Texas death row inmate. The inmate had access to a cell phone which was shared with other inmates and used to make over 2,800 calls in less than a month. The following investigation resulted in a statewide prison lock-down, the discovery of hundreds of cell phones, and the indictment of the inmate and his mother and sister who helped provide the phone.

"Unfortunately, it took a death row inmate calling a State Senator to bring the issue to light and to force the prison system in Texas to recognize and begin to address the problem of contraband in our prisons," stated Senator Whitmire.

Senator Whitmire is scheduled to appear at 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, July 15th before the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation chaired by Senator Rockefeller. Also invited to testify are Steve Largent, head of the CTIA Wireless Association; Gary Maynard, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; and John Moriarty, Inspector General of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

"The incident in Texas has proven that it is extremely difficult to stop all contraband in our prisons," commented Whitmire. "If allowing the jamming of cell phone signals prevents another person from going through what I went through, then I sincerely hope the wireless companies will work with Congress to pass federal legislation allowing prisons to block cell phone signals within their walls."

"I look forward to sharing my personal experience on the dangers of prisoners having access to cell phones," stated Senator Whitmire. "What happened to me should never happen to another person."

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