

# Union Says This Bill will Save Correctional Officers' Lives

*The Lieutenant Osvaldo Albarati Stopping Prison Contraband Act to crack down on the smuggling of contraband cellphones into Federal prisons.*

THOMSON, IL, UNITED STATES, April 22, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Senators Ossoff (D-GA) and Grassley (R-IA) introduced The Lieutenant Osvaldo Albarati Stopping Prison Contraband Act to crack down on the smuggling of contraband cellphones into Federal prisons. The bipartisan legislation would upgrade the charge of smuggling of contraband cellphones into a Federal prison from a misdemeanor offense to a felony.



The Lieutenant Osvaldo Albarati Stopping Prison Contraband Act

Lieutenant Osvaldo Albarati was a correctional worker at Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC) Guaynabo, where he was tasked with supervising dozens of prisoners. While there, he helped successfully break up a contraband smuggling group in his workplace.

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Albarati's murder is a key example of how vital it is that we, as correctional workers, are provided adequate resources to get our jobs done.”

*Jon Zumkehr*

He was a father of three. He was a devoted husband. He was a former police officer, and after 11 years of service in the Federal Bureau of Prisons, he was murdered.

Serving as a correctional worker is no easy task. In addition to keeping America safe by making sure dangerous inmates stay behind bars, they are often targeted for

attacks both inside and outside of the facility.

"We are those who protect America inside our nation's prisons. Those who are in a position and can make this happen should be protecting us," said Jon Zumkehr, AFGE 4070 Thomson Federal

## Prison

We've had over 120 cell phones at Thomson Federal Prison this year. This is a widespread issue across the BOP.," said Jon Zumkehr, AFGE 4070 Thomson Federal Prison

This legislation is named in honor of Lieutenant Osvaldo Albarati, a Bureau of Prisons (BOP) correctional officer who was murdered after completing his shift at the Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC) Guaynabo in 2013. Five men who later pleaded guilty to the crime admitted they targeted Albarati as a direct result of continuous seizures of contraband, including cellphones, by Albarati and other correctional officers. The inmate who placed the hit on Albarati did so using a contraband cell phone.

"Getting contraband cellphones out of prisons is very near and dear to my heart as I lost my husband—and my children lost their father—due to this. My husband was brutally murdered because he confiscated cell phones in a federal prison. And inmates used a contraband cell phone to put out a hit on him. Cell phones allow inmates to engage in and coordinate criminal activities both inside and outside the prison, including drug trafficking, extortion, violence, etc. I believe addressing this is crucial for the safety and security of our communities and the Federal Bureau of Prisons employees," said Mrs. Helen Albarati, widow of Lt. Osvaldo Albarati.

"Voices of JOE, a law enforcement advocacy group, fully supports the Lieutenant Osvaldo Albarati Stopping Prison Contraband Bill. There has been an increase in the smuggling and possession of contraband cellphones in our Federal Prison System. These phones are known to have been used to conduct criminal business such as drug dealing and even putting contracts on individuals, both inside and outside of prison walls," said Don Williams, President of Voices of JOE. "This legislation proposes a much-needed increase in the penalties for any individual found in possession of a cell phone in the prison population. Due to the criminal purposes of these phones, the penalties for possessing them must be in keeping with the harm they cause."

The bill was introduced by Sens. Grassley of Iowa and Ossoff of Georgia

Grassley, Ossoff Aim to Pull the Plug on Prison Contraband ([senate.gov](https://www.senate.gov))

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