



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Statement by DOJ IG Michael E. Horowitz on the “Lieutenant Osvaldo Albarati Stopping Prison Contraband Act”**

Department of Justice (DOJ) Inspector General Michael Horowitz applauded today’s introduction in the Senate of the “Lieutenant Osvaldo Albarati Stopping Prison Contraband Act,” by Senators Jon Ossoff (D-GA) and Chuck Grassley (R-IA), which will make it a felony to introduce a cell phone into a federal prison. The legislation honors the memory of Lt. Osvaldo Albarati, a Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) Correctional Officer, who was murdered in 2013 for his relentless efforts to stop the flow of contraband, including cell phones, into the Metropolitan Detention Center, Guaynabo, in Puerto Rico. As a result of the continuous seizures made by Lt. Albarati, a group of inmates plotted to have Lt. Albarati murdered and used a contraband cell phone to coordinate the timing and execution of Lt. Albarati’s murder.

Inspector General Michael Horowitz stated: “A cell phone in a prison is a deadly weapon. Yet, as our investigative work continues to demonstrate, contraband cell phones have proven to be pervasive inside many federal prisons, a reality that undermines the safety and security of these institutions for BOP staff, inmates, and the public.

Lieutenant Albarati was a true hero, selflessly dedicated to making MDC Guaynabo and his community safer by preventing criminal activity inside the facility. I commend Senators Ossoff and Grassley for honoring his memory by sponsoring this public safety reform and for recognizing the severity of this problem. By making the introduction of a cell phone into a prison a felony, as numerous states have already done, the ‘Lieutenant Osvaldo Albarati Stopping Prison Contraband Act’ will allow investigators and prosecutors to more effectively bring to justice those introducing cell phones into prisons, curb the flow of illicit cell phones into prisons, make our communities and prisons safer, and help to save lives.”

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