

# US regulator reverses course on in-flight calling

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US Federal Communications Commission chairman Ajit Pai has moved to block attempts to allow people to use cellphones to talk on airplanes

A top US regulator moved Monday to roll back efforts to allow cellphone use in aircraft, reversing course on relaxing a long-standing ban on in-flight calls.

Federal Communications Commission chairman Ajit Pai said he circulated a order, which would require a vote of the commissioners, to "terminate" a 2013 rule-making effort.

"I stand with airline pilots, [flight attendants](#), and America's flying public against the FCC's ill-conceived 2013 plan to allow people to make cellphone calls on planes," said a statement from Pai, who was appointed as chairman by President Donald Trump.

"I do not believe that moving forward with this plan is in the public interest. Taking it off the table permanently will be a victory for Americans across the country who, like me, value a moment of quiet at 30,000 feet."

The FCC, under Democratic-appointed chairman Tom Wheeler, voted 3-2 in 2013 to begin a process that could eventually allow personal phone use in airplanes.

Officials said at the time the rule-making effort was to examine the technical feasibility of using [mobile devices](#) in [flight](#), and that any authorization would require deliberations by the Federal Aviation Administration, and be subject to rules imposed by airlines.

Still, the 2013 initiative sparked protests from groups representing flight attendants, and members of Congress who objected to allowing voice calls on flights.

Some 60 members of Congress signed a letter at the time urging the regulatory agency to allow only text and internet services in flight, without [voice calls](#).

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