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Public Comments on Rates for Interstate Inmate Calling Services:=====

Title: Rates for Interstate Inmate Calling Services

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Comment: I am an attorney who has long represented, on a pro bono basis, an inmate in a California penitentiary. I have been shocked at the exploitative rates charged by the phone monopolies to prisoners and their families and friends who want to maintain contact with prisoners.

Most of the members of my client's family are not well-off, and the cost of calls is burdensome and limiting with charges so high, they have had to make fewer and shorter calls. But my client's punishment is imprisonment, not isolation from his family and friends beyond that required by imprisonment and by prison security. Crushing phone rates that punish members of his family are mean, unreasonable and inappropriate from every point of view.

I strongly support the initiative to ban kickbacks & bribes, really & to prison and jail authorities, kickbacks that induce prison and jail authorities to support the highest rates for calls. I support all aspects of the current regulatory proposal as a good start. Given the nature of this industry, however, and what amounts to institutional corruption of the governmental agencies supposedly & negotiating& on behalf of the customers, direct regulation of prison phone rates, to limit charges to those needed to provide only a reasonable level of profit, would be appropriate and desirable. I urge the FCC to give serious consideration to more intense regulation of this corrupt and corrupting industry.

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