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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-0911

February 27th, 2015

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON RULES
COMMITTEE ON
HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

Received & Inspected

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FCC Mail Room

2015

The Honorable Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary of the Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

*WCB
Consumers
Inmate
Call Serv.*

Dear Madam Secretary:

I am contacting you in regards to the proposed rule surrounding Rates for Inmate Interstate Calling Services that was issued on September 26th 2013 and is currently in the second further notice period. My central concern is that this rule will reduce the rate paid for inmate calling to the point that correctional facilities will no longer be able to afford to provide telephone services which would be detrimental to both inmates and investigators.

Based on the feedback from the sheriffs in my district and my own career in law enforcement, I feel strongly that concerns regarding the costs that jails will incur need to be considered carefully by your agency.

We clearly agree that it is vital for incarcerated individuals to have access to telephone services to maintain their support networks, and any action on this issue should take that into account. In addition to the effects on inmate populations, I worry that if jails and prisons are forced to eliminate inmate calling, they would be cutting off a source of evidence vital for investigations. In addition to gathering information about plans to bring in contraband or commit violence, law enforcement are also privy to inmate conversations that may include a confession or intimidation of a witness. The Queens County district attorney's Domestic Violence Bureau lowered the dismissal rate of its cases by 55 percentage points by recording inmate calls for use during investigations. The potential benefit to public safety requires costly technology that may not be possible under the proposed lower rate.

I urge you to reconsider the proposed order. Our jails are already facing immense fiscal pressure. If this rule does move forward, I would add that it is essential that the Commission allows as much time as possible for law enforcement agencies to adjust to the budget crunch and that there

be considerations for the different needs and capabilities of jails versus prisons. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Nugent". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" and "N".

Richard Nugent

Member of Congress