

To the Commission:

I would like to comment on WC Docket No. 12-375, in regard to telephone service for incarcerated individuals. My brother has been imprisoned by the Florida Department of Corrections and had been jailed before that. While the current contractor (Securus) charges less than some other vendors have (I paid more than \$20 for a three-minute call when he was in the Pinellas County Jail!), I still ask that you keep rates low. I would like to mention a few consumer issues with Securus that I think the Commission should address.

In regard to rates, I receive a decent middle-class salary. Fortunately, this means that I can afford the once or twice a week phone calls my brother makes. Yet, I realize I am an outlier in that I do not speak with him as frequently as a parent, child, or spouse would. According to classical legal theory, one of the purposes of criminal justice is punishment, but another tenet is rehabilitation. If my brother keeps up his relationships with me, his son, and our mother, it will provide great benefit when his sentence ends. Also, because we love, we will accept the calls and pay the bills. However, none of us committed his crime. Why should we be punished for his act?

As mentioned, I receive a decent middle-class salary. My heart aches for the innocent children who are denied conversations with incarcerated parents because their single parent cannot afford the phone calls. I believe the FCC has a moral imperative to these children to do their best to keep fees as low as possible while permitting the companies to have profits to provide the service.

I frequently have issues with Securus' automated voice reminders. The company leaves automated voice messages on my machine telling me that I need to pay my bill in the next few days, or I will not be permitted to receive calls. I then call to see what the problem is. Invariably, I discover I have been called in error, and I have already paid my bill. One *could* argue this is borderline harassment because I have paid my bill, but I acknowledge that I use their service. The erroneous reminders have happened at least four months in the past year, usually in groups of three or four, so I began to ignore the message because, as mentioned, when I call Securus, I am assured I am up to date on my payments.

Recently, I ignored the automated calls at my peril. I realized I had not received a bill in the past few weeks, so I suspected something could be amiss. When I called to verify that (as usual), I could ignore the calls, I was instead told that I had a bill due in three days. I asked them to send me a duplicate bill because, obviously, the prior one had been lost. I knew there was no way I could pay it on time, but if they mailed me a duplicate, I could pay immediately and minimize the time my brother could not reach me. They told me they could not mail me another bill unless I provided them an e-mail address. Valuing privacy, I refused. They absolutely refused to provide a duplicate unless I provided them an e-mail address. I complained to Securus that I always accepted my brother's calls, and they were now effectively shutting me out of my

brother's life until he was released. After I got off the phone (in tears), I realized I was being silly. Securus would be billing me soon anyway since my bill would be past due, and, of course, they would still want to collect from me for two months of calls. So, I waited them out and paid for two months of calls and had my service restored. I still have no idea why Securus will not send duplicate bills unless a customer provides them an e-mail address and violates their own desire for consumer privacy.

I also fault Securus for pushing people toward paying bills online or conducting business online. Consumer fears of data breaches have been well-founded. The newspapers inform us frequently about such breaches. Beyond that, I do not believe all inmate families with one income can afford home computers, Internet bills, phone lines (land and cellular), and software protection. Many do depend on public computers at libraries or neighborhood centers outside their homes. They further assume that all computer users have the savvy to avoid online exploitation of financial data and understand the dangers of computer security. My fear is that eventually Securus will only accept online payments, and, considering I have never paid a bill online, never checked my bank balance online, and wholly dedicated a credit card to online purchases only out of fear of interception and poor encryption, that day will mortify me. Since many online payments are made by credit card rather than automated bank withdrawal, I also believe the push to online will lead to higher consumer debt. Monthly payment by personal check certainly helps me on that score.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this docket. I hope my consumer perspective assists you in shaping policy.

Sincerely,

David A. Woldseth

Madison, Wisconsin