

November 9, 2010

Marlene H. Dortch,
Secretary Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Wright Alternative Rulemaking Proposal C.C. Docket 96-128

Dear Ms. Dortch:

I live in Jacksonville FL, Duval County where I receive collect calls from Brett Russell Claflin who is in the Taylor Correctional Institution. Currently I generally pay \$1.80 for a ten minute call, averaging \$10 per month for 1 weekly 10 minute call. Today I received a letter notifying me that starting December 1, 2010, I will now have to open a prepaid account and pay a fee to process my monthly payment, minimum payment amount of \$25 when I call or log-in (I'm including a scanned image of this letter from Correctional Billing Systems).

The costs of calls from incarcerated loved ones create a very real problem – In this case, it punishes me for trying to keep in contact with Brett who will be released one day and need to rely on family ties to get back on his feet. By utilizing this new system with its outrageous charges, they are setting him up for failure by reducing the contact he can have with me and other family members until the time he gets out.

I'm on disability & am on a very fixed income. I already sacrifice under the current system to let Brett call me each week; with this new system, I may not be able to set up this account they are requiring which effectively cuts off meaningful communication. Certainly, I can write to him & I do, but voice contact with family members is to me so much more important.

It seems clear that the primary reason the charges are so high is because prison phone service providers to correctional facilities capitalize on the high commissions. I believe these commissions are an unfair tax on families of inmates, including many who cannot afford these excessive rates.

It is my understanding that a recent cost study submitted by prison phone service companies has determined a "fair rate" that eliminates commissions, covers legitimate costs and provides a reasonable return for prison phone companies while dramatically reducing call rates.

There is an immediate need for national regulation of a nation-wide prison phone industry which exploits vulnerable consumers shamelessly. The FCC has legal authority to provide industry oversight. This authority can be found at 47 U.S.C. § 276(b)(1)(A)(requiring the FCC to ensure fair compensation for each and every completed call) and 47 U.S.C. § 201(b)(requiring that all telephone charges and practices must be "just and reasonable").

In the responsible exercise of its duty, the FCC should) prohibit the payment of "commissions," and eliminate all other means (such as hidden fees) to unjustifiably inflate the cost of prisoner phone calls; require prison phone companies to offer the broadest possible range of calling options at fair and reasonable rates; and adopt cost-based, "benchmark" rates (which will provide a measurement of whether rates are fair and reasonable) for *all* intra-state and inter-state prisoner collect, pre-paid, and debit telephone calls. The benchmark rates should cover legitimate costs and provide a reasonable rate of return to prison phone providers so that there will be incentives for businesses to provide these

services. Finally, the FCC should leave jurisdiction with the state public utilities commissions to decide requests for deviations from established benchmark rates when a service provider claims that a remote location or other considerations require an adjustment to make the provision of prisoner phone services feasible.

My hope is that this proceeding will result in fair and reasonable rates for the widest possible range of prisoner-initiated telephone calls. Please make sure fair rates will be made available to all inmate families everywhere.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,
Jennifer Fone