

This is a public comment for the Wright Petition (CC Docket-#96-128)

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**Received & Inspected**

**AUG 24 2012**

**FCC Mail Room**

Chairman Julius Genachowski  
Federal Communications Commission  
Public Comments  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

I am writing to ask that you consider the Wright Petition that I understand would put a cap on inmate telephone rates.

I have a loved one who is currently incarcerated in the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) and in order to speak with this person on the telephone I am charged outrageous rates. It is my understanding that the telephone provider, Public Communication Services (PCS) charges \$0.05 per minute to provide the actual inmate telephone service, and an additional \$0.15 is added to support a "special fund" created by PCS to generate additional profits for themselves and the MDOC.

This predatory telephone provider collects 30% of the money generated for this fund. They actually make more money from this fund than from providing the actual telephone service. For its part, the MDOC claims it needs this extra money to plug holes in the state's prison budget. Shouldn't that budget funding come through taxes equally spread across the entire tax base? It seems prisoners and families are being permitted to maintain their relationships through telephone calls only if they make a contribution to the MDOC operating budget. Their option is to not use the phone.

Excessive phone fees not only unfairly burden low-income families but also undermine the re-entry and rehabilitation efforts trumpeted by the MDOC. Taxpayers should not have to subsidize prisoner phone calls, but neither should the state and predatory phone companies make millions of dollars on the backs of some of the state's poorest people. This fund is generating over \$9 million annually. Keep in mind, this fund has nothing to do with the necessary cost of providing the telephone service; it's strictly pure profit and greed.

It seems the main function of our FCC is to protect consumers from predatory behavior, and if this doesn't qualify for that protection, then I don't know what would. Please cap these rates and do the right thing.

Sincerely, *Rebel Smith*

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Sincerely,

*Beverly Lynn*

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Samantha", written over a large, stylized cursive letter "S".