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

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Comment: I agree that high rates do limit the ability of most inmates to maintain contact with their community ties during their incarceration. It also affects the taxpayer financially because the collateral actions (i.e., dealing with an inmate's state-of-mind when the inmate is unable to maintain their community ties) ordinarily will require other legitimate actions on behalf of government employees working in the correctional facility.

The hardest part of incarceration on an individual is the first 48 hours. It affects the newly confined individual, their family, and loved ones. The event is unexpected and marks a series of unknowns in their life. When this incarcerated individual cannot establish contact with their support network because the use of the phone is cost-prohibited (i.e., family or friends are not available to help), the newly confined person's emotional well-being diminishes to a point where the government (i.e., staff

employees) may have to make interventions. These interventions could be time and energy to manage a suicidal situation, or controlling an emotionally distraught inmate acting-out in a manner that causes staff to use force to return order, control, and discipline to the facility.

Seeing the high rates reminds me of the feeling I have when I pay a high price for popcorn and a cola at a movie theater. I am a captured audience, and the theater takes advantage of it. However, the difference is that I chose to enter the theater and submit to the high price because I want to see the movie. Because the government has chosen to incarcerate someone, whom the consumer considers as being a family member, the government should not allow them, or their family member, to pay more than what is commensurate in the community for people who are not incarcerated. Most people do not want to be incarcerated.

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