

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

Received & Inspected

APR 29 2013

FCC Mail Room

RE: High Cost of Prisoner Phone Calls

April 19, 2013

THIS IS A PUBLIC COMMENT FOR THE WRIGHT PETITION (CC DOCKET #96-128)

As an inmate in the Michigan Department of Corrections, a separation from family and friends is, of course, mandated by the justice system. This means that for me to have any kind of a support system to encourage positive growth and rehabilitation, I must rely on the telephone system and thus be subject to the unfair and disruptive pricing structure put in place by the telephone service provider.

The average phone call here in Michigan costs the inmate close to or over \$3.00 for 15 minutes of talk time, depending on the collection method. This puts a severe strain on both the inmate and the family by putting a premium on communication in a situation where immediate response is sometimes necessary. Letters are the only viable alternative, and responses can take effectively up to a week to receive, eliminating the practicality of this medium.

The DOC does not offer an inmate many opportunities for employment, and the few positions that are available do not pay an adequate amount to purchase hygiene, food, clothing, and shoes - let alone to pay \$3.00 per phone call. This charge quickly diminishes an inmate's already low account balance, unfairly limiting the right to communicate with family members.

In the past year, the price of a phone call has doubled from \$1.50 to \$3.00, while inmate pay has stagnated at approximately \$25.00 per month for a janitorial position. This pricing structure makes each phone call roughly 12% of our monthly earnings. This is manifestly unfair and an abuse on an already struggling population.

Michigan inmates need relief, and I would be personally grateful for your assistance in regulating prison phone call prices to make communication more affordable. Thank you in advance for your time and assistance in this matter. You can make a difference!

Sincerely,



Edward Callens, #703275 (MI)

Macomb Correctional Facility

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

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FCC Mail Room

Dear Chairman Genachowski,

I am currently an inmate at
Central Utah Correctional Facility.

Because of my family's financial
struggles it is becoming increasingly
difficult to pay for the expensive
phone services available here at the
prison. We are only allowed to go
through one company called V-connect,
which has outrageous prices: \$2.92
for the first minute and .12¢ for
each additional minute for local calls.
Long distance calls are much more
expensive.

Because of the high cost for
phone calls I am able to make
very few calls each month. Not only
do I suffer from this, but my
family especially suffers emotionally
because I cannot call home much.

This heavy financial burden adds
to the heavy burden they already
carry.

On behalf of my family and I,
I ask that you put a stop to this
injustice, which is an unnecessary
punishment to me, but most importantly
to my family.

Communication with loved ones
has been very crucial for my rehab-

Date: 4-19-2013

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To: Chairman J. Genachowski, Federal Communications Commission.

APR 29 2013

From: Bashar Farraj, and inmate in Michigan.

FCC Mail Room

Subject: High cost of prison calls.

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

The most convenient and cheapest way for inmates to stay in contact with their families, friends, and loved ones is through phone calls. Last year the phone rates were \$1.50 per call, and this year phone rates jumped nearly double!

This issue is a problem and concern since the State doesn't pay inmates enough money to purchase food, hygiene, shoes, clothes, etc. For instance, the average monthly salary for a porter job (Janitorial work, custodial maintenance, cleaning up) is roughly \$20.00, whereas the price to make a phone call is around \$3.00. This is 15% of the money that we earn on a monthly basis.

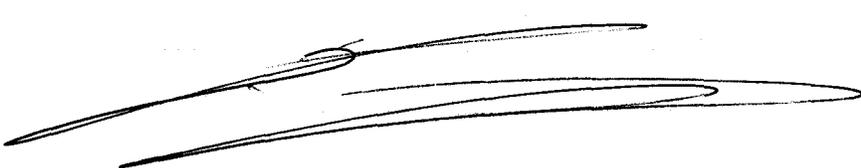
It is very crucial that we are able to call our children, wives, and families at least once a week. This will lessen the worry and stress that we go through during our incarceration period. Even most correctional officers agree with ^{us} on this point because it makes their job easier.

I would be grateful if you could make our phone call rates cheaper. Thank you very kindly, in advance, for your time and anticipated cooperation in this matter.

Bashar Farraj #322099

34625 26 Mile RD.

New Haven, MI 48048



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FCC Mail Room

Dear Chairman Genachowski,

This is a public comment for the Wright Petition (CC Docket #06-128). My name is Hilda Ireland, I have been incarcerated for sixteen months. I fortunately do not have any bills for the phone company, because my family is not what is considered financially comfortable they are considered lower class citizens and because the phone companies are so high priced they refuse to become a part of their hoax, I don't blame them, I haven't been able to talk to my oldest sons in a year because of the outrageous prices for out of state calls are \$15 for 15 min that's \$1 a min. I hope that this letter helps the cause. I have given the information to other inmates to your petition. I also want to thank you for everything you've done on this and other things as well. We all appreciate the time & effort that you and your team put into the "slum" of the world it feels great to know someone cares about us and our thoughts other than God.

Thank You & God Bless
Hilda Ireland

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

I have not talked to my father over the phone for five years because the expense of the call. My father lives in Oregon, and I am an inmate at the Iowa State Penitentiary. Before my trial, I was housed at the Cerro Gordo County Jail in Iowa. To talk to my father over the phone there, it would cost over twenty dollars a call. The call was paid for by my father. Because it was so expensive, my dad could only afford to talk to me once every two weeks. I felt alone. Now that I am located at the Iowa State Penitentiary, I pay for the phone calls, but my dad refuses to answer the calls because ^{of the} bad experience he had with the calls when I was in jail (the expense). He feels that talking over the phone would be a major expense for me. I miss hearing my father's voice. I would like to see the cost of using the telephone in jails & prisons be lowered. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jordan S. Johnson

Jordan S. Johnson