

FEB 15 2013

CHAIRMAN Julius Genachowski

Federal Communications Commission

FCC Mail Room

Public Comments

Support For:

445 12th Street, SW

The Wright Petition

Washington, DC. 20554

cc: Docket # 96-128

Charles E. Zellers, Sr., #1036758

Buckingham Correctional Center B1-113-B

P.O. Box 430

Dillwyn, VA 23936

Feb. 10, 2013

DEAR CHAIRMAN Julius Genachowski:

I hope this letter finds you well. Sir, I've been in prison for twenty long hard years. I'm serving a life sentence. My family has been paying between \$15.00 to \$20.00 per twenty minute phone call from me for twenty years. Due to the price being so expensive I could only call once or twice per month. When I called I would only have a few minutes to talk to Mom, Dad, Granny, Grandpa, my cousins and sons. Whoever was there. Here recently my Mom set up an account with an outside company that gave mom a local phone number to the prison I'm at. In order to call Mom, I would have to open a Prepaid GTL Debit Account here at the prison. It costs only

\$0.90 per twenty minute phone call. I still had to use GTL to get it approved by the party I was calling and GTL could still record and monitor the phone call. GTL found out people was using outside sources so GTL has since blocked all the numbers that they found. GTL WANTS my family to PAY GTL before we can use their phone system. They will not allow us to call our families collect any more. Here are the prices it costs me to use GTL now and my Mom only live 1 hour 1/2 from me.

° 1.75 connection plus °.23 per minute. ° 6.35 per phone call if I prepay on GTL Debit account here at Prison.

If Mom Prepays on her end sending GTL minimum \$25.00 it cost ° 7.25 for a 20 minute phone call.

Using an outside source for a local number it cost me \$0.90 on my end for GTL and Mom. pays the outside source \$1.00.

FCC should have a LAW passed where Families of Prisoners CAN use outside companies to sell local telephone numbers to families, just like in Businesses. By ~~the~~ GTL Blocking those legal phone numbers, that should be illegal.

Can you investigate GTL. They are calling telling families they are breaking the laws using local telephone numbers.

I hope you will help me and

My Family, My Father is currently 106 pounds and is dying from Cancer and GTL has my numbers blocked where I can't even call home. Recently GTL on Christmas Eve started Blocking prisoners phones until their families opened a GTL Account prepaying for GTL's services. This sounds crazy. That is like prepaying your Electricity. They come and turn off your home Electricity off saying if you want our services, you will open a General Electric Account for a Min. of \$25.00. When that runs out your electric will be turned off.

Of course GTL's procedures and Policies should be against the Law.

If pray you can help.

Respectfully,

Shane E. Zeller, Jr.

Received & Inspected

Vernon Robinson CB-3895
P.O. Box 244
Graterford, PA 19426

FEB 15 2013

FCC Mail Room

Feb. 4, 2013

Global Tel Link
Bea Berry, Billing Support Manager
2609 Cameron Street
Mobile, Alabama 36607

Dear Bea Berry,

I have to thank you for contacting me concerning my complaints about your phone system (Complaint #MR12334). In the time that it took you to respond to my complaint, I have lost a considerable amount of money using your phone system. I wrote to you about two problems that concerned me the most: third-party billing and "glitches" in the operating system. In this letter I will only concentrate on the "glitches" because that is the issue that's costing us the most money in here. The reason I am focusing on this one issue is because for some reason, important factors are being glossed over in my complaints, and this precludes me from being afforded an adept answer to my inquiries.

You informed me that GTL does not "issue credit for calls that are prematurely disconnected on a 'cell phone.'" While any reasonable person can appreciate the fact that cell phones have a greater possibility to "drop" calls, your blanket policy of denying credits for cell phone calls is deficient in fairness. ALL disconnections that are made to cell phones are not actually the fault of the cell phone. If you would read the letter I sent to Glenda Rankin—Billing Services Support in your company—you can see that I detailed and explained instances where the fault cannot be attributed to cell phone usage. I will give a brief synopsis to you again.

There are instances when people are on the phones and the entire system shuts off, cutting off everyone that is on the phone: this situation seems prevalent when the prepaid monies are credited to our accounts. That shutoff cannot be attributed to cell phone usage, because the ENTIRE institution goes off at the same time.

Another "glitch" that has become extremely common is where the person that we call can hear us, but we are not able to hear the person that we called. Any reasonable person will believe that the phone is disconnected if they can't hear the other party for some time, and they will hang up. In these cases, we are essentially not afforded our entire 15-minute call. I gather that you would be apt to consider this a dropped call. In saying that, I ask you to consider one thing: A dropped call will disconnect both parties, but I explained to you that the people we called can hear us, but we are unable to hear them; hence, the call is not severed and can't be attributed to a dropped call on a cell phone. I also dispute that faulty equipment is the result of innate abuse, because this problem occurs on EVERY phone in the institution. I will acquiesce that I am not proficient in the technology employed by your company, but unless EVERY phone is broke, this problem has something to do with the operating system. Therefore I believe that each call should be

examined to decipher if it was truly the fault of a cell phone and not just dismiss a problem because it was a cell phone being called.

Regardless of what type of phone is being called, I have instances where there is just a refusal to reimburse for problems that are not my fault. I actually have responses from the Institutional Telephone Coordinator that explicitly state that per GTL no refund will be issued. I will send you a copy of that TELEPHONE DISCREPANCY FORM that states that. But it seems as if the DOC and GTL are collaborating by interchanging responses so as to preclude anyone from receiving a refund for problems that are CLEARLY not our fault.

I ask you to look at two slips I have enclosed dated 11/14/12 and 1/14/13. These two slips clearly prove my point. On the slip dated 11/14/12, I wrote to complain about two phone calls that I made that were disrupted by the phone system. The Telephone Coordinator conceded that the calls were shortened, but the Coordinator also said that the problem most likely was probably due to cell phone reception. I then wrote back to the Telephone Coordinator to inform them that one of the phone calls was DEFINITELY to a landline and I was entitled to a refund. I explained that the call I made on 10/26/12 was to one of two numbers: (215)844-1263 or (215)844-1396, both of which are landlines. I asked the coordinator to confirm that the call was to a landline, to which the Telephone Coordinator responded: "These #'s were double checked and are listed as cell phones - Per DOC Policy - no refunds issued to cell phone calls." You can confirm yourself that these numbers are landlines and have been landlines for quite some time—one for over thirty years. Why am I not given a refund if there is a concession of a shortened call and I can prove that the call was to a landline?

Being as though I gave you an example of inadequate responses to our problems, will you try to remedy them, or will you continue to deny fault in any of this process?

This letter is not to try to garner a response of guilt from you or GTL. I simply would like to be treated as a consumer and have the product fixed. I gather that by the time I receive a response from you, I will have lost a considerable amount of money again. Being as though this is one of the FEW outlets that me and others at this institution are relegated to use to stay in touch with our loved ones, it's not as simple to boycott a bad service. So I entreat you to work toward fixing these problems.

Sincerely,

Vernon Robinson

Received & Inspected

FEB 15 2013

FCC Mail Room

Vernon Robinson CB-3895
P.O. Box 244
Graterford, PA 19426

Oct. 3, 2012

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing you concerning some nefarious practices employed by Global Tel Link, and quite possibly the Department of Corrections of Pennsylvania. For purposes of this letter, I will **mainly** concern myself with Global Tel Link because we have no grievance process to deal with them. Also, they not only manipulate us (inmates) but also our families. The reason I'm apt to include the PA D.O.C. is because they are beneficiaries of Global Tel Link's intrigues and they might be liable as well.

I probably should have written this letter some time ago, but Global Tel Link's recent use of sleight of hand has compelled me to write now. In recent weeks, the Collect Call service in this institution has been hampered by some "technical" problems. When we contacted the institution telephone coordinator, we were told that the institution is waiting for a response from Global Tel Link. A few days later, a memo was posted in the institution, informing us that if we have problems with our collect calling features, we should have our families and friends contact Global Tel Link at a specific number. The memo also told us that our family members might have to set up a billing account with Global Tel Link in order to be able to receive collect calls from us.

The problem with this is that our family and friends should not be inundated with bills for a service that they already have. If my family already has a collect calling feature on their present phone bill, why do they have to acquire collect calling service from another company too. Not to mention that they have to buy a set amount of collect call coverage, essentially **locking** them in to a certain amount of phone calls. Also, I'm not absolutely sure, but I believe that the calls are charged at a higher rate when you get Global Tel Link's billing service than if you just call collect without their service. It seems as if they've found a target group that they can **easily** take advantage of with little resistance.

This is not the full extent of Global Tel Link's schemes to fleece a disadvantaged segment of society. I'm sure if you look on Global Tel Link's comment board, you would see that I am not the only person who feels this way. There are also numerous problems that they fail to correct **within** the institution, probably because these problems net them a lot of profits.

There is one problem in particular that I'm **sure** nets them a lot of money. The only problem is that I, personally, cannot pinpoint who is more at fault for this problem—Global Tel Link or the PA D.O.C. Almost every week when prepaid phone accounts are credited for the inmates, the system seems to

"crash" and cut off all inmates at the same time in the middle of their phone calls. Numerous inmates filed "Telephone Discrepancy Forms" and grievances to correct the problem but to no avail. To compound the disregard for our role as consumers, the institution and Global Tel Link refuse to give us refunds. They initially try to deflect blame by claiming that "dropped cell phone calls" are out of their control. But once you prove to them that it wasn't a cell phone that you were calling, that's when the institution deflects blame to Global Tel Link and Global Tel Link deflects blame to the institution. Whomever the blame is shifted to, it is designed to absolve either party from giving us a refund. Also, the fact that the entire institution is cut off at the same time does not seem to factor into their reasoning. Unfortunately, our need to stay in contact with friends and family precludes us from refusing their inept service because we have no other choice.

I could send you copies of some of my "Telephone Discrepancy Form" response to show you that I explained in great detail the problems that we were facing as inmates. And from the response you can see that completely neglected to address the problem. These types of practices would be considered unfathomable by an average citizen who is free. Do we not warrant the same protection from illegal practices because we are inmates? I would like to say, regardless of what's thought of me as a convict, my family and friends have not been accused of anything.

Sincerely,

Vernon Robinson

Vernon Robinson CB-3895
P.O. Box 244
Graterford, PA 19426

Received & Inspected

FEB 15 2013

FCC Mail Room

Oct. 3, 2012

Better Business Bureau
P.O. Box 2297
Philadelphia, PA 19103-0297

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"crash" and cut off all inmates at the same time in the middle of their phone calls. Numerous inmates filed "Telephone Discrepancy Forms" and grievances to correct the problem but to no avail. To compound the disregard for our role as consumers, the institution and Global Tel Link refuse to give us refunds. They initially try to deflect blame by claiming that "dropped cell phone calls" are out of their control. But once you prove to them that it wasn't a cell phone that you were calling, that's when the institution deflects blame to Global Tel Link and Global Tel Link deflects blame to the institution. Whomever the blame is shifted to, it is designed to absolve either party from giving us a refund. Also, the fact that the entire institution is cut off at the same time does not seem to factor into their reasoning. Unfortunately, our need to stay in contact with friends and family precludes us from refusing their inept service because we have no other choice.

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Sincerely,

Vernon Robinson

Received & Inspected

Vernon Robinson CB-3895
P.O. Box 244
Graterford, PA 19426

FEB 15 2013

FCC Mail Room

Feb. 5, 2013

Federal Communications Commission
Julius Genachowski, Chairman
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Genachowski,

First of all, I applaud you for your efforts to convince the telephone companies to charge inmates lower rates. For far too long, the inmate population has been a segment of society that has been preyed on quite frequently. Inmates, however, are not the only people that are affected. Unfortunately, the tax-paying citizens who love and support the inmates endure much of the abuse too.

In recent months, your crusade against the telephone companies has become widely publicized. Seeing this, I decided to write you concerning issues, here in Pennsylvania, that entail more than just outrageous rates. If the current practices by Global Tel Link continue, it could possibly enfeeble the directives and policies you are trying to put in place.

I initially contacted the FCC on Oct. 3rd of 2012. I explained how Global Tel Link is supplying us (inmates) with inadequate service. I have been complaining within this institution about the service for over 2½ years. The problems have been exacerbated tremendously in the past year. My complaints have been dismissed as frivolous by the seemingly collaborative methods used by the D.O.C. and Global Tel Link. Both the D.O.C. and Global Tel Link seem skilled in stonewalling, and they continually evade pertinent questions that could rectify the matter.

I am beginning to believe that their constant rejection of my argument is in hopes that I will be dissuaded and no longer pursue justice in this matter. But I feel as though this is an argument that has some validity and it needs to be addressed. Being as though your crusade is along the same lines, I am asking for your help.

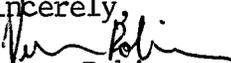
I am sending you a number of forms, letters, and responses that I have acquired in my fight to attain a quality telephone system. Hopefully, you can see the nonsensical answers and the stonewalling tactics used by the D.O.C. and Global Tel Link. My in-house grievance process has yet to be completed, but the initial answers show where it is headed. Regardless of that, I don't think I should have to wait for the process to be completed and continue to lose money on the phones in the meantime. I am only one person in THIS institution. I am positive that there are many others with this same problem who just haven't taken this route to correct the problem. All of the correspondence is in chronological order.

I sincerely implore you to look at these documents. If you can tell me that

their responses are right, I will search for other avenues to correct the problems. As I said before, with the publicity surrounding your crusade, I know that you are not reticent about this issue. That is why I am contacting you. Because I honestly believe that if you do get legislation passed for lower rates, this ILLUSION of an adequate system could surely net them the profits that they lose by lowering rates.

If you have any questions concerning anything that I've sent you, I am ready and willing to answer.

Sincerely,


Vernon Robinson

Received & Inspected

FEB 15 2013

FCC Mail Room

To: Superintendent Wenerowicz

From: Vernon Robinson CB-3895

Subject: Grievance #440582

I am appealing the decision from grievance #440582. I complained about a shortened phone call and the ONGOING problems that are associated with the phones, along with the Telephone Coordinator's reluctance to diligently address the problems.

Lieutenant Radle concluded that my phone call that I complained about was the full 15 minutes. I will concede that fact. He also conceded that the phone system does occasionally malfunction. He further states that when this happens, refunds are issued, and he also says if the system is compromised it is fixed as soon as possible. This response was appreciated, but it also points out a breakdown in procedure. I will show you how the Lieutenant's conclusions are directly contradicted by the Telephone Coordinator's responses and actions.

First of all, Radle says that when the phone system malfunctions, refunds are issued. If you look at the request slip that I have enclosed that's dated 3/10/10, the Telephone Coordinator states: "Per DOC Policy No Refunds." We (inmates) have never received a copy of this policy. Also, Radle's response clearly says that when the system malfunctions, refunds are issued, but he does not distinguish if that means phone calls to cell phones or hardlines. So that would intimate that regardless, if the system malfunctions a refund will be issued. Notice on the Telephone Discrepancy Form that is dated 1/26/11, the Telephone Coordinator now says: "Per DOC - No refunds on cell phone calls." If the system breaks, it shouldn't matter what kind of phone is called. I understand the purpose of treating cell phone calls differently, but that policy is being applied too broadly and there should be more diligence in ascertaining the reason for a disrupted phone call. I will get more in-depth with that later in the letter. All in all, the Telephone Coordinator is saying that no refunds are issued, regardless of whose fault the malfunction was.

The Telephone Coordinator has become adept at tailoring answers to preclude anyone from receiving relief. Keep in mind that the Lieutenant said that refunds are issued when the system malfunctions. I submitted a Telephone Discrepancy/Request Form dated 12/28/11. In this form I complained about the fact that the institution's power went out and cut off the phones. This was CLEARLY not the fault of any inmate. The Telephone Coordinator responded: "per GTL - not responsible for power being shut down in prison, no refund." I never said WHO should pay the refund, but the malfunction was not my fault or the fault of whom I called, so I should have been issued a refund. I wrote another Telephone Discrepancy/Request Form to ask why the Telephone Coordinator was interchanging responses to preclude me from receiving a refund, to which the Coordinator claimed that GTL responded to my last complaint.

The most egregious response from the Telephone Coordinator has come recently. I sent in a request slip that I have provided to you dated 11/14/12. The Telephone Coordinator responded by conceding that both of my calls were shortened, but the Coordinator also said that the calls were to cell phones and that no credits could be issued because it was probably due to cell phone reception. I then responded to the Telephone Coordinator's answer with the Telephone Discrepancy Form dated 1/14/13. I informed the Telephone

Coordinator that the call that I made was NOT a cell phone, and I'd appreciate it if the Coordinator would confirm this fact so as not to make me out to be a liar and make my claims seem frivolous. The Telephone Coordinator responded and told me that the numbers were DOUBLE CHECKED and they were listed as cell phones. This is my indisputable evidence of one of two things: either the Telephone Coordinator is not really looking into matters to ascertain the truth, or the Telephone Coordinator practices a blanket policy that ALL phones are cell phones. I can prove that both of these numbers that I inquired about are hardlines. One has been a hardline for over thirty years, and the other has been a hardline for quite some time. Therefore, either the Telephone Coordinator is lying to me, or the Coordinator doesn't really do their job.

The application of the "no refund" rule to cell phones can be understandable sometimes. The reason for that is because cell phones have a greater chance of losing a signal and cutting off. But that's not ALWAYS the case. When a cell phone call drops, the call is completely disconnected. The problem that's prevalent now is where the inmate would not be able to hear the person they called, but the person they called could hear the inmate. Being as though one party can hear the other but the other cannot hear them, this shows that it's not a dropped call, so it can't be blamed on cell phones. At least every call should be examined to decipher if it was the fault of the system.

If you juxtapose Lieutenant Radle's conclusions and the Telephone Coordinator's responses, you will see that there is a problem. I implore you to honestly look at what I have presented and make a decision to correct the problems with this phone system. I've lost a lot of money, and it's not easy to come by. I am relegated to use this inept system because it is one of the few avenues I have to the outside world.

I have enclosed Discrepancy Forms and Request Slips that catalogue the Telephone Coordinator's blatant disregard for my loss.



Received & Inspected

FEB 15 2013

FCC Mail Room

January 24, 2013

Vernon Robinson CB-3895
P.O. Box 244
Graterford, PA 19426

RE: Customer Service/Technical Difficulties
Account #: unknown
GTL Complaint #: MR12334

Dear Mr. Robinson

We appreciate your giving us the opportunity to respond to your complaints about Global Tel*Link service. We understand that our customers are in stressful situations, and our goal is to reduce that stress. We strive to provide our customers with the most efficient and compassionate service possible.

We received and attempted to investigate a complaint on your behalf concerning the rates. In order to further assist you please provide the area code and phone number the account is setup on. Please contact me at the number below. My office hours are Monday through Friday 8:00am to 5:00pm CST. I look forward to speaking with you to address your complaint.

We received your recent complaint regarding your dissatisfaction with the response we provided you in October 2012 regarding Global Tel Link's business practices and phone services. In your complaint there seem you have two main issues that concern you.

1. We are forcing family member and friends to setup prepaid accounts.

Response: Global Tel Link has changed their billing practices in the past year with a goal of relinquishing 3rd party billing. Global Tel Link has not "stopped" doing 3rd party billing, however we have reduced the dollar amount of calls allowed per 30 day period. Once a customer reach or exceed the 30 day limit set for their facility(Graterford has a \$5-30day limit) by GLOBAL TEL LINK, not the facility or the customer local phone provider, they are prompted to establish a "prepaid account" in order to continue

INMATE'S REQUEST TO STAFF MEMBER

Received & Inspected
FEB 15 2013

FCC Mail Room

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Corrections

INSTRUCTIONS

Complete items number 1-8. If you follow instructions in preparing your request, it can be responded to more promptly and intelligently.

1. To: (Name and Title of Officer) Mrs. Lorenzo - Telephone Coordinator	2. Date: 3/10/10
3. By: (Print Inmate Name and Number) Vernon Robinson CB-3895 Vern Robinson Inmate Signature	4. Counselor's Name Strenkowski
6. Work Assignment B-Block Autoscrubber	5. Unit Manager's Name Yodis
	7. Housing Assignment B-B'-059

8. Subject: State your request completely but briefly. Give details.

On the ~~date~~ above date I got on the telephone at approximately 8:28 p.m. After making a call using my prepaid account, I was cut off roughly 2 minutes into my conversation. I called the same number ~~the~~ again - with my prepaid account - and I was cut off again within 2 minutes. After the fourth call, I realized that it had to be the system because I never experienced dropped calls with this person before. Can I be reimbursed for my \$6.76? Numerous inmates around me were having the same problem.

9. Response (This Section for Staff Response Only)

In DC Policy NO Refunds

To DC-14 CAR only To DC-14 CAR and DC-15 IRS

Staff Member Name _____ / _____ Date _____
Print Sign

Received & Inspected

Telephone System Discrepancy Form

FEB 15 2013

Inmate Name: <u>Vernon Robinson</u>	Inmate Number: <u>CB 3885</u> FCC Mail Room
-------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------

Inmate Housing Unit/Cell Number: <u>B-B-059</u>

All information must be completely filled in. Please be specific.

Telephone Number Called: <u>267-752-0267</u>	Inmate Telephone Used: <u>12 Phone</u>
----------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------

Time and Date of Call: <u>Approximately 8:40 p.m. 12/16/10</u>

State exact nature of problem and/or concern: (Please print)

At the time noted above, I was on the telephone and had been connected for roughly 2 minutes. Then, the telephone said, "Goodbye." As I looked around, I realized that everyone on the phones around me had experienced the same thing. I know we run the risk of dropped phone calls or "alleged" three-way calling violations, but we should not be held accountable for a malfunction in the automated telephone system. These were not "dropped" phone calls that we experienced, this was the fault of the system. Can I be reimbursed for this phone call?

Also, is there any way possible that you can fix the system to be able to sustain the high volume of phone calls that are routinely made the day that money is added to our phone accounts? It is ridiculous to have to dial a phone number for 10-20 minutes before you are connected. I'm sure that people would spend more money if they could get through!

- Please be advised that the following are some reasons that your call may be disconnected:
- a. Other party accepts a call waiting tone;
 - b. Other party trying to make a three-way call;
 - c. Playing with the buttons, switch hook or receiver during your call;
 - d. Answering machines;
 - e. All 800, 888, and 900 numbers; and
 - f. Any number that does not allow collect calls.

\$1.69 refunded on 12/28/10

Signature: *Vernon Robinson*

Date: 12/16/10

Received & Inspected

Telephone System Discrepancy Form

FEB 15 2013

W

Inmate Name: <u>Vernon Robinson</u>	Inmate Number: <u>CB FCC Mail Room 3895</u>
-------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------

Inmate Housing Unit/Cell Number: <u>B-B-059</u>

All information must be completely filled in. Please be specific.

Telephone Number Called: <u>267-315-8347</u>	Inmate Telephone Used: <u>8 Phone</u>
----------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

Time and Date of Call: <u>6:15 p.m. Jan. 13, 2011</u>

State exact nature of problem and/or concern: (Please print)

I sent you a discrepancy form on the 14th of January to complain about this same incident. I was on the phone and before my time was over, the automated machine said, "Goodbye." Everyone who was on the phone experienced the same thing. Needless to say, this was not a dropped phone call. The automated system must've had one of its "glitches". I was wondering if I could be reimbursed, because we shouldn't be held liable for a "glitch" in the automated system.

This isn't the first time that I've requested a reimbursement. You've refunded my money for this reason before. Tonight, the phones did the same thing, twice. I understand that you can't fix this problem. Can you please tell me who to grieve to to have this technical problem fixed? If some of these problems were fixed, it would be beneficial to the inmates and the institutions.

Please be advised that the following are some reasons that your call may be disconnected:

- a. Other party accepts a call waiting tone;
- b. Other party trying to make a three-way call;
- c. Playing with the buttons, switch hook or receiver during your call;
- d. Answering machines;
- e. All 800, 888, and 900 numbers; and
- f. Any number that does not allow collect calls.

Per DOC - NO refunds on cell phone calls

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

Date: 1/26/11

FEB 15 2013

FCC Mail Room

B-BLOCK TELEPHONE DISCREPANCY/ REQUEST FORM

Date: 12/28/11

To: Institutional Telephone Coordinator

From:	<u>Vernon Robinson</u>	<u>CB-3895</u>	<u>B-B'-059</u>
	Name	DC#	Cell Location

PIN #: 220-627

RE: Telephone Trouble

Please give a brief but detailed explanation about your telephone/pin problem. If you are having a problem with a specific telephone number(s), be sure to list them.

On this date I was on the telephone at
approximately 10:46 a.m. The electricity in the
jail went off and the phones went off too.
I know that you don't give refunds for reasons
that could possibly be the fault of the people we call,
but this was the fault of the prison.

Telephone Coordinator's Response

on BT - not responsible for power being
shut down in prison, no refund

Inmate's Signature [Signature]

Unit Manager [Signature]

INMATE'S REQUEST TO STAFF MEMBER
Received & Inspected

FEB 15 2013

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Corrections

INSTRUCTIONS

Complete items number 1-8. If you follow instructions in preparing your request, it can be responded to more promptly and intelligently.

1. To: (Name and Title of Officer) FCC Mail Room
Telephone Coordinator

2. Date: 11/14/12

3. By: (Print Inmate Name and Number)
Vernon Robinson CB-3895

4. Counselor's Name
Clark

[Signature]
Inmate Signature

5. Unit Manager's Name
Regan

6. Work Assignment
B-Block Autoscrubber

7. Housing Assignment
B-B-059

8. Subject: State your request completely but briefly. Give details.

I am writing you to inquire about a problem I've been having with the phones as of late. There seems to be a new "glitch" that has become prevalent.

On 11/13/12 at roughly 7:35 p.m. on #6 phone on B-Block, I was having a conversation with a family member. In the middle of our phone call, I was no longer able to hear my family member at all. After roughly 4 or 5 minutes I hung up. When I called her back, she told me that she could hear me talking, but I was unable to hear her. The phone system disrupted my phone call on the second call too.

I feel as though I'm entitled to a refund and this problem should be fixed. This problem cannot be attributed to a cell phone because as I said, my family member could hear me, but I could not hear them. Also, the same thing happened to me on 10/26/12 on #5 phone at 8:30 p.m. And this was a land line. So can you reimburse me and fix the problem or at least point me in the right direction to the responsible party?

9. Response (This Section for Staff Response Only)

both shortened calls were to cell phones - no credits can be issued

problem may be due to cell phone reception

To DC-14 CAR only

To DC-14 CAR and DC-15 IRS

Staff Member Name _____ / _____ Date _____
Print Sign



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

Received & Inspected

FEB 15 2013

FCC Mail Room

BUREAU OF CONSUMER PROTECTION
21 South 12th Street, 2nd Floor
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107

215-560-2414

November 21, 2012

Vernon Robinson
#CB-3895
P.O. Box 244
Graterford, PA 19426

Re: Global Tel Link
BCP-12-05-032173

Dear Mr. Robinson:

This office has reviewed your recent correspondence against Global Tel Link. The Bureau of Consumer Protection enforces Pennsylvania's Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law, 73 P.S. § 201-1, et seq., a civil law enacted to address fraud, misrepresentation and deception in the sale, servicing and financing of consumer goods and products.

Unfortunately, the issues you outlined in your correspondence do not fall within these parameters and, therefore, the Bureau will not be able to assist you. The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections - Inmate Grievance has primary jurisdiction over these matters. You may want to contact this unit to lodge a formal complaint.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. We do appreciate the concerns you expressed and thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. If we can be of assistance in the future, do not hesitate to contact us.

Very truly yours,

Janis Parrilla
Agent Supervisor

mh
29



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 3265, HARRISBURG, PA 17105-3265

IN REPLY PLEASE
REFER TO OUR FILE

Received & Inspected

Date: 10/26/2012

Inquiry #3036629

FEB 15 2013
FCC Mail Room

VERNON ROBINSON CB-3895
P.O. BOX 244
GRATERFORD PA 19426

Dear VERNON ROBINSON CB-3895:

The Public Utility Commission received a letter from you regarding your utility service with Global Tel Link. Based on the information contained in the letter, the Bureau of Consumer Services (BCS) did NOT open an informal complaint.

Please be advised that your letter raises issues that are not within the jurisdiction of the PUC. You might consider sending a copy of the letter to the following:

Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General
16th Flr.
Strawberry Square
Harrisburg PA 17120
(800) - 441-2555

Or

Federal Communications Commission
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Or

Federal Trade Commission
Consumer Complaints
600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20580

Note that the FTC does not resolve individual complaints. The agency takes complaints to determine if there is a trend, and investigates when a certain number of complaints are received against a certain entity.

Also, note that friends and family who have Verizon Digital Voice/Digital Fios, do not have the capability to receive incoming/ collect calls. Fios does not have the ability to deal with "third party" services. You might wish to advise your contacts of same, because if they move to digital, they cannot accept collect calls.

Sincerely,

PUC Bureau of Consumer Services



Received & Inspected

FEB 15 2013

FCC Mail Room

Corporate Headquarters
2609 Cameron Street
Mobile, AL 36607
ph: 251.479.4500
fax: 251.473.4588
web: GTL.net

October 26, 2012

Vernon Robinson # CB- 3895
PO Box 244
Graterford, PA 19426

Account # MR. 11863
FCC Complaint
Inmate# CB 3895

Dear Vernon Robinson,

The information that you've received regarding Global Tel Link changes to billing methods and limit reductions is correct. Global Tel Link has implemented new Policies and Procedures requiring customers to prepay for inmate calls where previously they were billed by their Local Telephone provider. GTL has chosen to no longer bill third party and eventually all accounts will be Direct Billed or Prepaid. It is also true that the account holders are required to contact GTL to see what type of account is required. Therefore, please inform your family members and friends to contact GTL Customer Service @ 1 877 650 4249.

*Kind regards,
Glenda Rankin
Billing Services Support
Global Tel*Link*



Received & Inspected

FEB 15 2013

FCC Mail Room

Vernon Robinson CB-3895
P.O. Box 244
Graterford, PA 19426

November 4, 2012

Global Tel Link
Glenda Rankin, Billing Services Support
2609 Cameron Street
Mobile, Alabama 36607

Dear Glenda Rankin,

I want to thank you for responding to my FCC complaint in a timely fashion. I understand that an inmate's queries are minuscule in the scheme of a corporation's preferred consumer, but I implore you to hear me out one more time.

In your response to my complaint, you informed me that GTL has adopted new policies and procedures for their billing methods. While I still question the integrity of this process, I noticed that you failed to address an integral part of my complaint. There is the possibility that you felt as though part of my complaint doesn't apply to the affairs of your position. But I believe that if you can answer part of the complaint, you should at least acknowledge the other parts of the complaint. So I beg you, if you are unable to address this inquiry, could you please forward it to the correct department?

Coincidentally, the day I received your response, I also happened to use the GTL system and was cut off in mid-conversation. This is one of the major issues that plague us in the institution. We are experiencing many technical difficulties that disrupt our phone calls. The fact that the difficulties exist is not the problem. The denial by the people who run the system is insulting. These problems have existed for some time, for the company to not correct them is a blatant disregard for our consumer's rights. These "technical difficulties" cost us a lot of money, and it enhances GTL's profit lines. Not only have you refused to correct the problem, but you also refuse to give any refunds for problems that are not caused by the consumer.

Let me give you some examples of the "technical difficulties" that we seem to experience quite often. We have instances where the prepaid monies are credited to the accounts and when inmates are using the phones that evening, the whole institution will go off at the same time—you can't blame that on cell phones. As of late, there have been instances where the men in this institution would all of a sudden not be able to hear their loved ones on the phone. The person that was called could hear us, but we cannot hear them, causing us to believe that the phone has disconnected. There are other problems too, but that's just a few that are prominent. I could show you "Telephone Discrepancy Forms" that were submitted to the institution's telephone coordinator. The response would probably infuriate you if you had to deal with them yourself. I can send you copies of these responses, but they mainly put the fault square in your lap.

I noticed that at the bottom of your stationery you have four words that I

PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Received & Inspected

Formal Complaint Form

FEB 15 2013

Please print in ink or type.

FCC Mail Room

1. CUSTOMER (COMPLAINANT) INFORMATION

Your name, mailing address, county, telephone number, utility account number and service address:

Name Vernon Robinson

Street/P.O. Box P.O. Box 244 Apt # N/A

City Graterford State PA Zip 19426

County Montgomery

Daytime Telephone Number Where We Can Contact You: () N/A

E-mail Address (optional): N/A

Utility Account Number (from your bill) N/A

If your complaint involves utility service provided to a different address than your mailing address, please list this information below.

Name

Street/P.O. Box

City State Zip

2. FULL NAME OF UTILITY COMPANY (RESPONDENT):

Global Tel Link

3. TYPE OF UTILITY (check one)

ELECTRIC

STEAM HEAT

GAS

WASTE WATER

WATER

MOTOR CARRIER

TELEPHONE (local, long distance)

(e.g., taxi, moving company, limousine)

4. **COMPLAINT** (check one)

A. In general, what is your complaint?

- I want to oppose the company's proposed rate increase.
- There are incorrect charges on my bill.
- There is a reliability, safety or quality problem with my utility service.
- I received a notice that my utility service is being terminated.
- I would like a payment agreement.
- Other (explain).

B. State the facts of your complaint.

Include any specific dates, times or places that may be important. If the complaint is about a bill, tell us about any charges that you believe are not correct. Use additional paper if you need more space. Provide copies of all relevant documents you believe will support your complaint.

Global Tel Link continually employs practices that are designed to gouge me and others at this institution. These practices enhance their profit lines tremendously. If this inadequate and inept service is, in fact, not designed to bolster Global Tel Link's profits, their neglect at fixing the problems makes them just as liable as if they intentionally provided bad service.

One problem is with a policy that Global Tel Link has recently implemented. They are now requiring that ALL phone calls be prepaid through Global Tel Link. Therefore, our family members and friends would have to set up an account with Global Tel Link in order to receive collect calls, regardless of whether they have collect calling service through their own provider or not. Since Global Tel Link only sells prepaid increments of time, this essentially locks our family and friends into a set amount of phone calls. It also inundates our family and friends with an extra phone bill for a service that they already receive through their own provider. I'm not sure if this is what's considered a monopoly, but I'm apt to believe that this policy was implemented on a segment of society that is left little choice if they want to stay in contact with family.

Global Tel Link's MOST egregious action is their inaction concerning the telephones within this institution. This telephone system seems to have "glitches" and "technical difficulties" that pilfer accounts daily. When the institution telephone coordinator is contacted about these glitches, the coordinator responds by saying, "Per D.O.C. no refunds," or, "Per Global Tel Link, no refunds." With the latter response, it can be inferred that Global Tel Link has been made aware of the problems with the phone system. These "glitches" always seem to involve the phone system being cut off or your phone conversation being interrupted, which would sometimes cause a person to call back because they weren't afforded their whole fifteen-minute phone call, and if you pay for a fifteen-minute phone call and you don't receive it, you've been robbed.

ATTACHMENT "A"

I didn't just take the telephone coordinator's inference to be true that Global Tel Link knows about the problem. I also wrote the FCC, who then forwarded my complaint to Global Tel Link. Global Tel Link responded to my complaint, but they answered only a small part concerning third-party billing. I wrote them again to emphasize the daily problem of the "glitches" in the phone system. They have yet to write me back.

I am sending you a packet of forms that I submitted in an effort to assuage these problems. I am also sending my correspondence to Global Tel Link and others that seem to draw nothing but nonsensical answers.

The packet of forms is marked EXHIBIT "B".

5. RELIEF

How do you want your complaint to be resolved? Use additional paper if you need more space.

First, I would like the PUC to look into whether Global Tel Link's new billing methods are within the realms of the law and they do not constitute a monopoly.

Secondly, and most importantly, I would like the PUC to demand that Global Tel Link fix the "glitches" in their operating system. If they cannot fix the problems, they should be ordered to pay for interrupted phone calls that are clearly not the fault of the consumer.

6. PROTECTION FROM ABUSE

Answer the following question if your complaint is against a natural gas distribution utility, an electric distribution utility or a water distribution utility **AND** your complaint is about a billing problem, a request to receive service, a security deposit request, termination of service or a request for a payment agreement.

Has a court granted a "Protection from Abuse" order for your personal safety or welfare?

YES

NO

7. PRIOR UTILITY CONTACT

Answer the following question only if you are a residential customer and your complaint is against an electric distribution utility, natural gas distribution utility or a water distribution utility.

Have you spoken to a utility company representative about this complaint?

YES (includes appeals of BCS determinations)

NO

If you tried to, but could not speak to a utility company representative about your complaint, please explain why.

8. LEGAL REPRESENTATION (IF ANY)

If you are represented by a lawyer in this matter you must provide your lawyer's name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address, if known.

Lawyer's Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Area Code/Phone Number _____

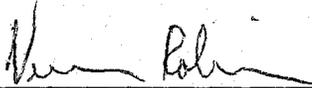
E-mail Address (If Known) _____

5. VERIFICATION AND SIGNATURE

You must print or type your name below on the line provided for the verification paragraph, and you must sign and date (in ink) this form on the lines provided.

Verification:

I Vernon Robinson, hereby state that the facts above set forth are true and correct (or are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief) and that I expect to be able to prove the same at a hearing held in this matter. I understand that the statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. C.S. § 4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to authorities).

 (Signature) 12/31/12 (Date)

Title of authorized employee or officer

10. FILING

Please return the completed form to one of the addresses listed below:

If using U.S. Postal Service:

If using overnight delivery service:

Secretary Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission P.O. Box 3265 Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265	Secretary Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission 400 North Street Commonwealth Keystone Building, 2 nd Floor Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Facsimiles and/or electronic filings of the complaint will not be accepted.

If you have any questions about filling out this form, please contact the Secretary's Bureau at 717-772-7777.

Keep a copy of your complaint for your records.

Received & Inspected

INITIAL REVIEW RESPONSE

FEB 15 2013

(Facility)
(Address)

FCC Mail Room

This serves to acknowledge receipt of your grievance to the assigned Grievance Officer. The response is as follow

Inmate Name:	Robinson, Vernon	Inmate Number:	CB3895
Facility:	SCI Graterford	B-B-1059	G-B-2015 B-B-1059 ws
Grievance #:	440582	Grievance Date:	12/14/12
Publication (if applicable):			
Decision:			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Uphold Inmate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grievance Denied <i>ws</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Uphold in part/Denied in part		
<i>It is the decision of this grievance officer to uphold, deny or uphold in part/deny in part the inmate's initial grievance. This response will include a brief rationale, summarize the conclusion, any action taken to resolve the issue(s) raised in the grievance and, relief sought.</i>			
Response:	Frivolous		
<p>A review of the Inmate Telephone System was conducted for the timeframe you have indicated, according to the records provided your phone call lasted 15 minutes. The telephone system at times does not function properly when this occurs refunds are issued, this did not happen in your case. Also when the phones or the system is compromised it is fixed as soon as possible.</p> <p>This Grievance is denied.</p>			
Signature:	<i>Roddy</i>		
Title:	<i>COM</i>		
Date:	1/5/13		

RECEIVED JAN 16 2013

cc: Superintendent
Facility Grievance Coordinator
DC-15
File

Received & Inspected

FEB 15 2013

Date 1/14/13

FCC Mail Room

To: Institutional Telephone Coordinator

From: Vernon Robinson
Name

CB-3895
DC#

B-B'-059
Cell Location

PIN #: 220-627

RE: Telephone Trouble

Please give a brief but detailed explanation about your telephone/pin problem. If you are having a problem with a specific telephone number(s), be sure to list them.

I JUST received a request slip that I sent to you on Nov. 14th. Your response to my inquiry was erroneous. In giving this response, you essentially imply that my issue is frivolous. I am asking you to correct your response because I feel that it would be irresponsible for an erroneous statement to be put forth as fact.

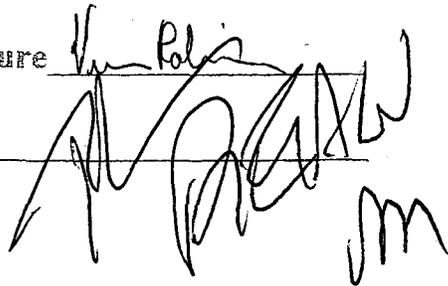
As you can see on the request slip, I inquired about 2 calls that were cut short. You responded that the calls were to cell phones and that could have caused the problem. As I said in the request slip, the call on 10/26/12 at 8:30 p.m. on #5 phone was to either (215) 844-1263 or (215) 844-1396, neither of which are cell phones. Could you please confirm that ~~this~~ this call was to a landline? And since it was, am I entitled to a refund now? Because your earlier response was wrong.

Telephone Coordinator's Response

These #'s were double checked and are listed as cell phones - Per DOC Policy - no refunds ISSUED to cell phone calls

Inmate's Signature

Unit Manager



Received & Inspected

FEB 15 2013

12/12/12

FCC Mail Room

Telephone Coordinator

Name: Vernon Robinson

DC#: CB-3895

Cell Location: B-B-059

PIN #: 220-627

RE: Telephone Trouble

Please give a brief but detailed explanation about your telephone/pin problem. If you are having a problem with a specific telephone number(s), be sure to list them.

At approximately 8:00 p.m. on 12/11/12 I was on the phone - number 9 phone on B-Block - and the phone just went dead on me, well - before my allotted time was supposed to be over. THIS WAS NOT A CELLPHONE, it was a hardline. Regardless of that, there is a new "glitch" that seems to be prevalent on this phone system where the person we are calling can hear us but we can't hear them, causing us to believe the phone is disconnected and we'll initiate a second call. I've written you a request slip prior to this - to which you have yet to answer - detailing this problem. This same thing happened to me on 1/13 on #6 at 7:45 and 1/26 on #5 at 8:30. My subsequent phone calls prove that they could hear me but I couldn't hear them. Can this be fixed?

Telephone Coordinator's Response

The call you placed on #9 lasted 15 min

Inmate's Signature

[Handwritten Signature]

Unit Manager

[Handwritten Signature] UM

DC-804
Part 1
Rev 9/2010

Received & Inspected

FEB 15 2013

Leventhan Radio
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
P.O. BOX 598
CAMP HILL, PA 17001-0598

phone
FOR OFFICIAL USE
4410582
GRIEVANCE NUMBER

EGG Mail Room
OFFICIAL INMATE GRIEVANCE

TO: FACILITY GRIEVANCE COORDINATOR <i>Wendy Shaylor</i>	FACILITY: S.C.I.G.	DATE: 10/14/12
FROM: (INMATE NAME & NUMBER) Vernon Robinson CB-3895	SIGNATURE OF INMATE: <i>Vernon Robinson</i>	
WORK ASSIGNMENT: B-Block Autoscrubber	HOUSING ASSIGNMENT: B-B1-059	
INSTRUCTIONS: 1. Refer to the DC-ADM 804 for procedures on the inmate grievance system. 2. State your grievance in Block A in a brief and understandable manner. 3. List in Block B any action you may have taken to resolve this matter. Be sure to include the identity of staff members you have contacted.		
A. Provide a brief, clear statement of your grievance. Additional paper may be used, maximum two pages (one DC-804 form and one one-sided 8½" x 11" page). State all relief that you are seeking. At approximately 8:00 p.m. on 12/11/12, I was on the phone and I was unable to continue my call because of a problem with the phone. The phone goes silent and I am unable to hear the person that I called. This is not the first time that this has happened to me and I filed a "Telephone Discrepancy Form" to inform the telephone coordinator of the problem. Coincidentally, this is not the first time I informed the coordinator of this problem. I had just sent the coordinator a request slip detailing the problem before, but the coordinator did not answer it. Anyway, the telephone coordinator returned my "Telephone Discrepancy Form" in about two days. The coordinator informed me that my call "lasted the full 15 minutes." I wholeheartedly dispute the assertion that I was on the phone for 15 minutes. In spite of that, my discrepancy form CLEARLY detailed the ongoing problem that is occurring with the phones. I also gave the examples that I had written in my previous unanswered request slip that bolsters my argument that the phone system is in error. And I specifically asked at the end of the discrepancy form, "Can this be fixed?" The coordinator completely disregarded the entirety of my complaint. <p style="text-align: right;">cont. on attachment</p>		
B. List actions taken and staff you have contacted, before submitting this grievance. I've contacted the Telephone Coordinator numerous times via "Telephone Discrepancy Form."		

Your grievance has been received and will be processed in accordance with DC-ADM 804.

Wendy Shaylor
Signature of Facility Grievance Coordinator

12/18/12
Date

WHITE Facility Grievance Coordinator Copy CANARY File Copy PINK Action Return Copy
GOLDEN ROD Inmate Copy

The problem with this is that the Telephone Coordinator has continually ~~ignored undisputable facts that prove the fallibility of the telephone system.~~ The Telephone Coordinator has continually given surreptitious answers to complaints so the D.O.C. or the telephone provider could be absolved of any responsibility. The coordinator chooses to answer PARTS of a complaint. I even once asked was there someone else I could complain to and the coordinator ignored that question. I have many "Telephone Discrepancy Forms" to prove this. Not once has the coordinator accepted that the telephone system was in error.

I would like an acknowledgment that the system is in error, and I REALLY would like the problem(s) fixed.

440582