

Received & Inspected

SEP - 4 2013

FCC Mail Room

August 25th 2013

Robert Eugene Sapp
FM-2539 / D-A-59
SCI-Albion of Pennsylvania
10745, Route 18
Albion, Pa. 16475-0002

To: Chairman Julius Genachowski,
FCC - Public Comment

RE: HIGH PRICES OF PRISON PHONE CALLS BY G.T.L. & SCI-ALBION. THIS IS A PUBLIC COMMENT FOR THE WRIGHT PETITION (CC-DOCKET #96-128).

Dear Julius Genachowski,

Hello, I am writing this letter to inform you that Pennsylvania Prisons are also charging inmates, their families, and their friends, very high collect call phone rates. I cannot call my family collect anymore, as the D.O.C. of Pennsylvania put in place with the phone company G.T.L. (GLOBAL TEL LINK), a new system. With this new system, your family and friends, have to contact G.T.L. to set up an account before we can call our families or friends collect, and there is a min. set up fee that they have to pay to do this. My family cannot afford this set up fee or the cost of the up front payment to open this account. My family has always made payments with their own phone company when I was able to call collect, it was easier for them to do this. The D.O.C. of Pennsylvania and G.T.L. took that choice away from our families and our friends. Most inmates cannot afford to purchase the phone cards that the D.O.C. sells to us, and there is no point in purchasing these phone cards, when you only get one call, maybe two for \$10.00, For me, \$10.00 will only get me, maybe 10 mins of phone time with my family. The D.O.C. does not pay the inmates very good, they keep raising prices on everything, but they never raise our pay rates. I went from being able to call my family twice a year to not being able to call them at all. Yes I do write my family, but there is nothing like being able to hear your families voices. I know that we were placed in prison for breaking some type of law, but our families should not have to pay high prices to be able to speak with us. Prisons are no longer prisons, they are businesses that just warehouse us and get very rich by doing so. They get rich from the tax payers and from the families of the inmates that are in the state prisons. Our families are what gives us a reason to change our lives so that we will not get out of prison and commit more crimes. We need a cheap way of staying in contact with our families, but the D.O.C. of Pennsylvania would rather us not to have contact with our families unless we pay them a lot of money to do so. Please help our families so that they do not have to put up

with this any longer. I thank you for your time and help.

THANK YOU RESPECTFULLY,

Robert Eugene Sapp

Received & Inspected

SEP - 4 2013

FCC Mail Room 6/22/2013

To: Mr. Julius Genachowski

FCC - Public Comments

Re: Phone rate gouging

DEAR CHAIRMAN,

Securus Correctional Center Billing

This is a follow up letter to my February diatribe. The Illinois prison system recently contracted with a new collect-call company called Securus. The new company charges \$4.10 for each connection and up to a 30 minute call. It sounds better than the old 50¢ a minute rate we were paying until reality sets in. The sad fact is that the new rate isn't any better because many calls are terminated long before the 30 minute time limit is up. [dropped cell phone calls, a shorter time on the phone mandated by the whim of prison officials, lockdowns or disturbances causing officials to cut phone connections] If I call and am forced to hang up for some reason ~~to~~ my caller gets charged 4.10 - (one, five, fifteen, thirty minutes) the length doesn't matter. ~~to~~ The charge is made. My friend Elaine got stuck with \$12.00 in charges for 3 calls totalling less than 10 minutes. A far cry from the 90 minutes she should've received. There are no roll over credits for calls terminated early. When challenged, Securus stated its policy was never to refund for early terminated calls to a cell phone number. The kleptocrats are at it again Mr. Genachowski. Without

Service

1-800-844-6599

To: FCC Commissioner Mrs. Mignon Clyburn

August 21, 2013

445 12th St. SW,
Washington, D.C. 20554

From: *FR 8341*

SCI Huntingdon
1100 Pike st
Huntingdon, Pa 16654

Received & Inspected

SEP - 4 2013

FCC Mail Room

Re: Intrastate Prison Phone Calls

Dear Mrs. Clyburn,

I am writing to let you know that the recent FCC ruling on the prison phone system will allow me to call my family, who live out of state, more then just once a month now. Thank you. But now the issue of "In State Calling" is at hand. We pay \$5.15 for a 15 minute pre-paid phone call. I know that the prisoners in Michigan pay \$1.60 for a 15 minute phone call, no matter where they call. This is because their state has legislation in place that prohibits the Dept. of Corrections from making profits of receiving kickbacks from the inmate phone system. These kick backs need to be eliminated so that all prisoners can afford to use the phone every week. I am only able to call home once a month and to other family who live in this state, I can only call 2 times per month. In this state there are over 55,000 inmates, the greedy company who owns this system, Global Tel Link, they have eliminated collect calling so that we are forced to buy phone time from them. We no longer have the option of calling collect. Please right this wrong and end D.O.C. kick backs and place a flat rate on all in state calling. No one but people in prison pay over \$5.00 for a phone call. This creates an undue hardship on our families and they don't deserve that. We are also begging you to eliminate the "SURCHARGE". This can be from 2-3\$ and thats just greed. A pre-paid call of 19¢ per minute in here seems reasonable to us but the SURCHARGE is not. Thats what drives the cost of the call into the "UNREASONABLE" range. Please eliminate the surcharge, end high prison rates and allow us to reconnect with our families. Thank you very much for your help & time. God Bless.

Sincerely,

Heriberto Ortiz

MR. JOAQUIN RODRIGUEZ
ID # BN-3470
S.C.I. DALLAS

1000 Follies Road
Dallas, PA 18612-0286

Received & Inspected

SEP - 4 2013

FCC Mail Room

August 24, 2013

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

Dear Mr. Genachowski:

Recently there was a press release indicating that on Friday, August 9, the FCC voted to cap rates for prison interstate telephone calls.

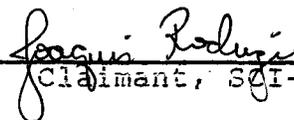
I am including a copy of the article which reported this decision.

I am respectfully requesting a copy of the FCC's 2-1 decision.

Additionally, the article indicated that affected parties could file a claim for reimbursement of excessive costs for the interstate calls. I am requesting any available information (such as a claim form) indicating how one may initiate the process for recoupment of excessive fees/costs, etc.

Much thanks for your office's attention to my inquiry.

Sincerely,


Claimant, S.C.I.-Dallas

attachment/

Agency Caps Inmates' Phone Rates

BY JOE PALAZZOLO

The Federal Communications Commission voted Friday to cap rates for prisoners' telephone calls, ending an era in which inmates were charged as much as 89 cents a minute on top of setup fees that ran as high as \$3.95 a call.

The commission's 2-1 vote caps interstate charges for pre-paid calls at 21 cents per minute and collect calls at 25 cents per minute. Those are still high at a time when unlimited long distance offerings are commonplace, but prisoners can file challenges and seek refunds for rates exceeding 12 cents per minute and 14 cents per minute for regular and collect calls, according to the FCC.

The move is the culmination of a process that began more than a decade ago when Martha Wright, a Washington, D.C., grandmother, filed a petition with the agency because she wanted to speak with her grandson, who was serving a murder sentence outside the district, without incurring \$18 in charges for a five-minute phone call.

Telecommunications companies and law-enforcement groups had argued the higher rates were reasonable in light of the costs of oversight, security and technology required to monitor calls and analyze recordings.

But the FCC majority said the rates reflected agreements in which states looked for the biggest commission rather than the best deal for consumers, and that the burden was largely borne by inmates' families.

"Their wait is finally over," said acting FCC Commissioner Mignon Clyburn, invoking the words of singer Sam Cooke. "It's been a long, long time coming, but change has finally come."

Prisoners' rights groups say the high rates stemmed from so-called site commissions—payments that phone-service providers agree to pay to the states in order to win business from



Bethany Fraser, a family member affected by the high telephone rates charged to prison inmates, listens to Friday's Federal Communications Commission hearing in Washington.

prisons. Prisoners have argued unsuccessfully in federal court that exclusive arrangements between prisons and service providers restrict their phone choices and drive up rates, chilling their speech in violation of the First Amendment.

Last year, the Eighth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejected the First Amendment claims of an Arkansas prisoner who said a 10-minute interstate call cost him \$10.43, plus taxes and other charges.

The Eighth Circuit case highlighted a contract between the Arkansas Department of Corrections and Global Tel*Link, in which the company turned over 45% of its gross revenue to the prison system.

According to a study by Prison Legal News, a prisoner-advocacy group, states receive on average 45% of revenue from prisoners' calls.

The FCC decision also barred service providers from adjusting their interstate rates to account for such commissions, and from charging higher rates for those who use telecommunications relay services because of hearing or speech disabilities.

A spokesman for Global Tel*Link, which according to its website, provides service to about 50% of inmates nationwide, didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. The company is owned by New York-based private-equity firm American Securities LLC, which didn't respond to a request for comment.

CenturyLink Inc., another major service provider, declined to comment. Another provider, Securus Technologies Inc., didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

Inmate calling services are typically limited to collect or

debit-based calling from pay phones. The new regulations apply only to interstate communications, but the commission has asked for public comment on revising rates for intrastate calls. Some service providers in meetings with FCC staff said their business could become unsustainable if the FCC lowered interstate rates without addressing rate caps set by the states for calls within their borders.

Commissioner Ajit Pai, who dissented from the ruling, said he supported regulation of inmate calling rates but questioned whether the FCC had the resources to sort legitimate costs from others.

"To put it simply, I'm concerned the order will prove very difficult to administer and have unintended consequences," he said.

—Ashby Jones
contributed to this article.

THOMAS C. WILLIAMSON
GF0164 / D-A-59
S.C.I. ALBION OF PENNSYLVANIA
10745, ROUTE 18
ALBION, PA. 16475-0002

AUGUST 24, 2013

TO: CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
FCC-PUBLIC COMMENT

RE: HIGH PRICES OF PHONE CALLS THRU "GTL" & " S.C.I. ALBION"

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

Received & Inspected

SEP - 4 2013

FCC Mail Room

I'M WRITE SO THAT I MAY HAVE MY VOICE HEARD ON THE MATTER OF "GLOBAL TEL-LINK"
AND THE HIGH PRICES THEY ARE CHARGING FOR PHONE SERVICE FOR INMATES,

AS AN INMATE WITHIN THE D.O.C. AT "ALBION", I WORK 35HRS A WEEK JUST TO MAKE
ABOUT \$45.00 A MONTH, AND WITH THE PRICES OF THE PHONE CARDS IT IS HARD FOR ME TO
BUY THE CARDS AND MAKE SURE THAT I HAVE ALL THE ECCENTIALS THAT I NEED FOR THE
MONTH, MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS CAN NOT AFFORD TO MAKE AN ACCOUNT WITH GLOBAL TEL-LINK
JUST TO RECEIVE COLLECT CALLS FROM ME AND I CAN NOT ALWAYS AFFORD TO BUY PHONE CARDS
TO CALL HOME, SO THERE IS MANY MONTHS THAT I HAVE NO CONTACT WITH FAMILY MEMEBERS,
FREINDS, AND LOVED ONES DUE TO THE FACT THAT "GLOBAL TEL-LINK" IS STOPPING FAMILY
MEMEBERS FROM USING THEIR OWN PHONE COMPANY'S COLLECT CALL SERVICES (WHICH IS
CHEAPER THAN GTL).

I HAVE FAMILY MEMEBERS THAT ARE GETTING OLDER AND HAVE FAILING HEALTH AND
BECAUSE OF GTL'S CONTRACT WITH PENNSYLVANIA'S D.O.C. IT IS HARDER AND HARDER FOR ME
AND MY FAMILY, GIRLFREIND, AND LOVED ONES TO STAY IN CONTACT WITH EACH OTHER AND
THAT PUTS A STRAIN ON MY FAMILY, FRIENDS AND ME. DUE TO THE FACT THAT WE ARE UNABLE
TO HAVE CONTACT WITH ONE AN ANOTHER BECAUSE WE ARE UNABLE TO PAY THE KIND OF MONEY
THAT GLOBAL TEL-LINK IS CHARGING FOR PHONE CALLS. WHEN THERE IS NO REAL REASON THAT
MY FAMILY SHOULD HAVE TO BE MADE TO SET UP A ACCOUNT WITH GLOBAL TEL-LINK JUST TO
EXCEPT COLLECT PHONE CALLS FROM ME WHEN THERE WAS NEVER ANY PROBLEM WITH FAMILY
MEMEBERS EXCEPTING COLLECT CALLS THRU THEIR PHONE COMPANY.

I HOPE THAT THIS MATTER CAN BE TAKEN CARE OF AS THAT IS PROBLEM HAS CAUSED
GREAT GRIEVE FOR FAMILY MEMBER'S THAT HAS SOMEONE IN PRISON.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME
RESPECTFULLY


THOMAS C. WILLIAMSON

August 14, 2013

Received & Inspected

SEP - 4 2013

FCC Mail Room

Dear Chairman Genackowski,

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

I am writing about the high
cost of inmate phone calls. I know they
vary from different prisons but
no other collect phone call for 15 min.
lasts as much. I had a collect phone
call from Gateway Rehabilitation Center
cost almost 30⁰⁰ for 15 min. Not knowing
that it would be that costly. But even
other 15 min. phone calls from prisons
range from 4⁰⁰ to 15⁰⁰ for 15 min.
Please consider whatever is possible
to reduce these costs.

Sincerely

Evelyn M. Faust

Step Son - Michael Faust CL9828

SCI Albion - PA Prison System