

BEFORE THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, DC 20554

IN THE MATTER OF	§	SEPTEMBER 30, 2013
	§	
Rates for Interstate Inmate	§	WC Docket No. 12-375
Calling Services	§	
	§	

PUBLIC COMMENT

SUMMARY

1. I totally support the FCC's decision to regulate inmate calling companies. This is long overdue.
2. INTRASTATE (Local) calls must to be regulated. The current FCC order does not protect inmates and their families/friends who do not call interstate.
3. Local (intrastate) phone calls often cost as much or more than the interstate long distance phone calls documented by the FCC.
4. I am paying \$12.04 for a 15 minute phone call, to a county jail 10 miles down the road, calling a LOCAL number (same area code).
5. Inmate phone services are rude and full of hidden costs. I pay \$6.95 every time I add money to my inmate telephone account, only to be gouged later on by costly connection fees and high per-minute rates.
6. Enclosed is a statement of \$12.04, 15 minute local phone calls.

INTRODUCTION

My name is Christopher Thomas. I am 22 years old and live in Pennsylvania. I think it is excellent that the FCC has taken steps to eliminate the outrageous practice of gouging families of those incarcerated. I have familiarity both with Securus and DSI-ITI, due to my loved one being transferred between two facilities. The outrageous phone rates placed a heavy financial burden on me.

I totally support, 100%, the FCC's actions in this matter. HOWEVER, this is one problem with the FCC's order. THERE IS A

NEED FOR REGULATION OF INTRASTATE (LOCAL) CALLING RATES! I have read the comprehensive order drafted by the FCC and realized that while this Order does protect those inmates making long distance calls across state lines, what about those of us whose loved ones are just down the road?

URGENT NEED FOR INTRASTATE (LOCAL) REGULATION

My best friend is currently incarcerated in the Beaver County Jail in Beaver, Pennsylvania. This jail has contracted with DSI-ITI to provide inmate phone services. My telephone number is a LOCAL phone number, with the area code of 724, the same as the jail's and the same as their number that calls when he calls me. The rate for a phone call is astronomical. Higher than the long distance calls! It is actually cheaper for me to get in my car and drive to him, get lunch, and drive home, than it is for him to call me on the inmate telephone system.

In the Beaver County Jail, which uses DSI-ITI, each 15 minute telephone call costs **\$12.04**. After perusing the FCC Order, I found this cost to be higher than most of the LONG DISTANCE rates. While the FCC takes an important stance and brings this issue to light, it is important to also protect those of us whose loved ones are not calling interstate. A possible solution to this quandary would be to pay to get an out of state telephone number, so that when I am called, I would be subject to the new, lower FCC rates, rather than the UNREGULATED rates for the intrastate calls. This is absurd.

I have attached a copy of my DSI-ITI phone account to this comment.

While DSI-ITI and Securus Technologies insist that charging lower rates will actually lower security, I would indicate the already overwhelming holes in the security procedures. For instance, I had routinely been adding a third-part onto the phone call when I was called on my cell phone. In fact, I didn't even know this was forbidden at the time. Securus and DSI-ITI claim that their innovative products prevent such problems and security breaches, but they do not. Their "security"

technologies are simply an excuse to charge exorbitant rates for phone calls in a totally unscrupulous fashion.

In addition to this, the service provided by these companies is horrendous. Their software is buggy and routinely takes days for issues to be resolved. E-mails to DSI-ITI's support staff routinely go unanswered. Some representatives can be helpful, but others just tell you to create a new account, with little care or concern for your frustration. I have been hung up on several times when contact DSI-ITI's support department.

Despite the horrendous per-minute charges, I am also charged exorbitant rates to even put money onto the phone account. DSI-ITI charges \$6.95 for me to load money on the account online. When I call in and talk to an operator to load money on the account, the rate is even higher. For instance, to load \$40 onto the phone account, I paid \$48.65 when a live operator did the transaction for me, because the online phone software would not function properly. The whole system is rife with bugs and errors, yet the lack of competition has created an eco-system when rudeness to customers is tolerated.

CONCLUSION

While the FCC has taken an important first step in addressing the problem of unscrupulous inmate phone companies, much work remains to be done. Intrastate phone calls are currently unaffected by the FCC's ruling, creating a paradoxical situation where it may be cheaper to call across the country than to call a jail 10 miles down the road. Surprisingly, the local phone rates of county jails often surpass long distance, interstate phone call rates. An exhibit of my personal inmate phone account is attached for the FCC's review. The current situation creates significant financial burden on me and families with loved ones incarcerated. I urge the FCC to regulate intrastate inmate phone rates as well as interstate phone rates. I thank the FCC chairwoman for her actions. This has truly renewed my faith in the U.S. Government to address the needs of its citizens. I only hope that the FCC will address intrastate calling rates and put an end to this outrageous and unscrupulous behavior once and for all.



My Phone Account > Recent Activity

Current Activity

Below is a summary of your account for the current billing period.

To view your recent activity for a specific Phone Number, select the Phone Number you wish to view.

Phone Number:

BillPay Facility	Pending Payments	Amt. Available for Calls
BEAVER COUNTY JAIL	\$0.00	\$93.17

Pending Payments will typically be applied within 24 hours.

Account Activity since last statement:

Date/Time	Description	Facility	Minutes	Amount
09-Sep-2013 08:37 AM	TRANSFER TO ANOTHER ACCOUNT	CLEARFIELD COUNTY PRISON		\$4.91
24-Sep-2013 06:51 PM	WEB PAYMENT	BEAVER COUNTY JAIL		\$35.00
24-Sep-2013 06:51 PM	TRANSACTION SERVICE FEE	BEAVER COUNTY JAIL		\$6.95
24-Sep-2013 08:30 PM	COLLECT	BEAVER COUNTY JAIL	15	-\$12.04
25-Sep-2013 08:27 AM	TRANSFER FROM ANOTHER ACCOUNT	BEAVER COUNTY JAIL		\$4.91
25-Sep-2013 08:21 PM	COLLECT	BEAVER COUNTY JAIL	15	-\$12.04
26-Sep-2013 07:03 PM	COLLECT	BEAVER COUNTY JAIL	10	-\$8.76
29-Sep-2013 04:30 PM	WEB PAYMENT	BEAVER COUNTY JAIL		\$100.00
29-Sep-2013 04:30 PM	TRANSACTION SERVICE FEE	BEAVER COUNTY JAIL		\$6.95
