

12/20/2013

Re: FCC 12-375

To Whom It May Concern;

I would like to comment on the high cost of intrastate prison phone calls as a family member of a person who is incarcerated in Washington State. Our family uses a prepaid phone account that enables the person in prison to call us as long as funds are available. The current rate for in intrastate call is \$3.66 for up to 20 minutes and it costs us an additional \$5.95 processing fee to add money to that account.

I believe that these telephone companies take advantage of the families of prisoners by charging high rates. It is a struggle for our family to afford regular phone calls that are necessary for maintaining a healthy relationship with our loved one in prison. We have no other option but to use the one contracted service of the Department of Correction's choosing.

It is very important to me that I maintain a healthy close relationship to my family member who is in prison. The high cost of prison phone calls makes keeping in regular contact very difficult. The phone company pays a very high kickback to the Washington Department of Corrections to secure their exclusive contract. It is understandable that there would be some additional cost compared to a call made outside the prison environment because of the extra security monitoring and installation and maintenance of the actual phones in prison. The cost of the calls does not reflect these extras only, there is also companies making huge profits by taking advantage of my situation.

I hope that the FCC will look at the extreme variations in cost from state to state and correct these telephone companies' actions. They have a monopoly because we as family members and friends of prisoners are unable to select any other option for receiving phone calls from prison.

Thank you,

Kimberly Boone

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