



December 13, 2013

Marlene H. Dortch, Commission Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Room TW-B204  
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: *In the Matter of Rates for Interstate Inmate Calling Services, WC Docket No. 12-375, “Inmate Calling Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community”***

Dear Commissioners:

We, the undersigned Deaf Community members, allies and national and state organizations, urge you to mandate the installation of videophones, captioned telephones and other auxiliary aids to support access to telecommunication for deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and speech challenged prisoners and their family members.

On August 9, 2013, the Federal Communications Commission (“Commission”) appropriately voted to limit the sky-high rates charged by ICS providers to family members of all prisoners. For years, ICS providers have charged these same excessive rates for calls via Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (“TTY”)—a technology that can require more than quadruple the amount of time it takes to use a videophone or voice telephone. Some ICS providers have chosen not to provide any technology for prisoners with disabilities, while others provided equipment but erected other barriers to access—charging extra for prisoners to use TTYS; blocking telephone relay numbers, placing TTY technology in locations that are locked or inaccessible, or even creating phone systems that function solely through voice-command.

The Commission’s own reports indicate that TTY calls account for a mere 12% of the total relay volume and that TTY usage is continuously decreasing, having cut in half over the past seven years. To make matters worse, TTYS and videophones are incompatible. This means that deaf prisoners in hundreds of prisons across the nation cannot communicate with their loved ones who no longer use outmoded TTY technology.

Simply put, family members of deaf prisoners have endured an even greater financial burden and often have been entirely denied communication with their loved ones solely based on disability. The Commission emphasizes that its recent efforts are to ensure that “rates for Inmate Calling Services are just, reasonable, and fair.” While we applaud the Commission’s decision to ensure that rates are just and reasonable, we remind the Commission that there is no fairness without equality.

At base, the Commission must employ its authority to mandate that:

- (1) ICS providers ensure that deaf and hard of hearing prisoners, prisoners with deaf family members, and prisoners with speech challenges have access to videophones, captioned telephones, TTYs and other auxiliary aids;
- (2) ICS providers reduce rates charged for videophone and TTY such that family members of deaf prisoners pay the same amount for the same amount of communication;
- (3) ICS providers immediately add all relay numbers, including Spanish relay numbers, to its list of approved numbers; and
- (4) ICS providers assemble and report data regarding rates for and complaints from prisoners with disabilities and their family members.

Anything short of a Commission order mandating these four fundamental components of universally accessible Inmate Calling Services will leave countless prisoners and their family members exactly where they were prior to the Commission's decision—disconnected. Universal accessibility is part and parcel of fairness and the rights of people with disabilities should not be disregarded for regulatory convenience.

The Commission has the authority to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal telecommunication access and we are calling upon you to ensure that prison telecommunication is affordable *and* universally accessible—that fair reaches all, not some.

Sincerely,

Talila A. Lewis, President, HEARD

&

the Undersigned Individuals and Organizations

Ki'Tay D.	Davidson	DISABILITY RIGHTS COALITION
Jason	Tozier	
Jody	Denniston	
Kathryn	Kerr	
Alec	Mcfarlane	LIBRARY FOR DEAF ACTION (LDA)
Ethan	Johnson	
Anthony	Barraza	
Melanie	Bates	
Jeff	Rosen	
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Gerard	Romilus	
Donna	Camp	
Georgia	Ottoni	
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Leticia	Arellano	
Bob	Lenderman	
Nicole	Rideout	
V	Parker	
Deirdre	Burchette	DC VR
Juan	Rivera	
Edward	Chesky	
Corinne	Warren	
Phillip	Daniel	
Marguerite	Montgomery	
Karlina Maria	Wiederhold	
Regina	Ajiboye	
James E.	Green Sr.	VIRGINIA CARES EX-OFFENDERS PROGRAM
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Arielle	Adams	
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Bets	Wohl	RSA
Tracy	Rosenberg	MEDIA ALLIANCE
Bendita	Malakia	
Nina	Endler	
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Vivian	Penda	SAC
Emily	Riley	
Juliana	Sarkodee	
Anne	Ehrkichmann	EMBRACING LAMBS MINISTRIES

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Jonathan	Hopkins	
Carlos	Pareja	
Brian	Ambrose	
Linda	Lobello	
Golly	Larry	
Clifford	Andrews	
James	Cole	
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Megan	Arnold	
Nicolette	Davis	AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
Rebecca	Heinsen	
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Tinesha	Jackson	
Alex	Friedmann	HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENSE CENTER
John Mark	Smeenk	
Janie	Willner	
Leila	Kang	
Sheila	Moore	
Nicholas	Marritz	
Shanya	Larsen	
Benro	Ogunyipe	
Joyce	Tesar	
Jennifer	Heiser	HEARD
John	Zottoli	RETIRED
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Ashley	Pappineau	
Jonathan	Dollhopf	SOUTHERN TIER INDEPENDENCE CENTER
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Brandi	Mcgowan	
Julia	Sanders	
Feta	Fernsler	
Jill	Moebus	VAD, NVAD, NVRC
Gary	Gray	BLACK ATHLETE SPORTS NETWORK
Kylie	Musolf	
Jennifer	Hess	
Barbara	Eger-Klatt	SELF-EMPLOYED
Diane	White	
Lindsay	Michie	THOUSAND KITES

Frank	Pennisi	SOUTHERN TIER INDEPENDENCE CENTER
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Joanne	Scheer	
Alanna	Offield	MEDIA LITERACY PROJECT
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Leonard	Ernest	
Beth	Easterling	
Emilyrose	Johns	
Janie	Keltgen	RETIRED
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Michelle	Herman	
Jackie	Plant	
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Hamza	Jaka	
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Susan	Ruff	SOUTHERN TIER INDEPENDENCE CENTER
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Leeanne	Valentine	
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Peggy	Daniels	NVAD VAD HH
Nikole	Cababa	
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Karen	Mayes	
Mathew	Mccollough	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DEVELOPMENTAL
Jeffery	Humfeld	SELECT...
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Melissa	Jensen	
Melissa	Jensen	
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Kyra	Walker	
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Christopher	Doi	
Elicia	Varnado	
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Carrie	Quigley	CARRIE QUIGLEY AND ASSOCIATES, INC
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Maaret	Klaber	
Glorie	Kayhart	
Matthew	Borus	
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Violette	Hays	
Esperanza	Dodge	
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Patricia	Dilts	
Lena	Amick	
Justine	Garrett	
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Hector	Lozano	CELEBRATE RECOVERY INSIDE
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Mary	Mellendick	
Maria	Dollhopf	
Alexander	Thompson	
Deborah	Palsha	MOTHER OF A DEAF IN-MATE
Mason	Wiley	PUBLIC INTERNATIONAL LAW & POLICY G
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David	Steib	OFFICE OF PUBLIC INTEREST
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Tjetesa	Shettle	
	Posthuma	



Mei	Kennedy	
Deborah	Palsha	MOTHER OF A DEAF IN-MATE
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Sam	Brooks	
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Leo	Johnson	
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Jim	Ernst	OWNER OF LAWN SERVICE
Stephanie	Sanders	WIFE OF AN DEAF MUTE
Sherwin	Turkin	SELF
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Mentoring	Mentoring Today	MENTORING TODAY
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Jamie	Whitbread	
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Mark	Kennedy	
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Leonard	Kuehne	1971
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Hilary	Anderson
Henry	Harvard
Barbara	Carter
Barbara	Carter
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Antonia	Lindsey
Brandon	Bridges
Stephanie	Hydal
Patti	Durr
Brian	Sturgis
Annmarie	Duchon
Lina	Homman
Lauren	Marks
Renny	Harvard
Christina	Sentelle
Samuel	Jones
Melis	Odabas-Geldiay
Georgia	Otoni
Danna	Hailfinger
Priyanha	Nadanasabesan
Michelle	Mckeever
Emily	Kvalheim
Jackson	Galloway
Nathan	Cunningham
Gera;D	Cain
Kaila	Trevino
Charlotte	Nguyen
Tutrang	Nguyen
Adam	Newman
Carly	Smith
Roberta	Gage
Evan	Brown
Lisa	Newmark
Naomi	Hartman
Denise	Gage
Sean	Reilly Wood

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Russell  
Erica  
Colleen  
Andraya  
Kay  
Sherill  
Sherill

Abu-Rahmeh  
Harvard  
Wynn  
Moomey  
Scott-Harris  
Youngblood  
Archer  
Archer

Tyrone  
Merideth  
Bruce  
Bruce  
Bruce  
Hinda  
Nicole  
Monique

Giordano  
Oliver  
Hubbard  
Hubbard  
Hubbard  
Kasher  
Marchesano  
Barney

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AUSTINE ALUMNI ASSOICATION  
AUSTINE ALUMNI ASSOICATION  
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Elizabeth  
Raychelle

Pattison  
Harris

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Bellamie  
Sharon Ann  
Danny  
Kenneth  
William  
Richard  
Keri  
Terrylene  
Andrea  
Julia  
Elizabeth  
Lizzie  
Kristen  
Anne  
Tania  
Sandra  
George  
Gail  
Carrie Lou  
Chrissie

O'Hara  
Bachleda  
Dror  
Hernandez  
Rothschild  
Loftus  
Latini Iii  
Ogrizovich  
Sacchetti  
Smith  
Pergolini  
Vita  
Sorkin  
Chapman  
Potter  
Patterson  
Jaramillo  
Lareau  
Mosawy  
Garberoglio  
Preuss

HEARD VOLUNTEER PRISONER-ADVOCAT  
CRESCENT TECHNICAL SERVICES



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Sandra	Leland	
Vonnie	Basham	
Erik	Etzwiler	
Kimberly	Terry	
Shannon	Reese	
Gloria	Nathanson	
Bentley	Fink	VOCSERVICES
Mia	Heisley	
Parker	Dority	
Jamie	Patterson	
Kristi	Luna	
Judy	Chapman	
Dana	Fields	
Devona	Carpenter	
Trevor	Anderson	
Laila	Quick	
Belle	Braunig	
Christina	Wheaton	
Gordon	Pickering	MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF
Elise	Whitworth	
Jackson	Busenbark	
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Margaret	Cummings	
Hector	Lozano	CELEBRATE RECOVERY INSIDE
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Stephanie	Juarez	
Brett	Dignam	
Brett	Dignam	
Rena	Wilson	
Michal	Brown	
Prison	Law Office	PRISON LAW OFFICE
Colleen	Moomey	
Colleen	Moomey	
Manivanh	Phaophonh	
Brianne	Catron	
Michele	Westfall	
Crystal	Green	
Lydia	Laird	
Summa	Loeffler	
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Nat	Wilson	
Miki	Smith	
Jeannie	Rodriguez	
Amanda	Hepburn	
Wesley	Street	
Elizabeth	Shiver	
Laura	Rovner	CIVIL RIGHTS CLINIC - U OF DENVER COLI
Jana	Owen	NYC METRO REGISTRY OF INTERPRETERS
Rebecca	Friedman	
Leslie	Walker	PRISONERS LEGAL SERVICES MA
Heather	West	
Kelly	Mcannany	NEW YORK LAWYERS FOR THE PUBLIC IN'
Nicolyn	Plummer	BFL
Peter	Mccann	
Craig	Egan	
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Landis	Pulido	LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH CENTER
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Anna	Chamiec-Pauneto	
Adam	Bires	
Jamila	Stevenson	
Dakota	David	
Victoria	Fairchild	
Elly	Hawkins	
Ryan	Durgin	
Janice	Cagan-Teuber	
Alex	Friedmann	HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENSE CENTER
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Natalie	Smith	NV-CURE
Rusita	Avila	
Gerardo	Menjivar	
Dante	Trevisani	

Margaret	Bryant	DEAF & HARD OF HEARING SERVICES CEN
Adrienne	Hoffman-Lewis	
Mary	Flesh	
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Carlyn	Ezzo	
Leshara	Mccoy	
Shelby	Kerr	
Carol	Orwin	
Kathleen	Deacon	
Virginia	Conklin	
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Ricky	Loggins	
Levi	Loggins	
Abraham	Loggins	
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Barbara	Raimondo	
Barbara	Raimondo	
Tanya	Freeman	
Barbara	Raimondo	
Letra	Daniels	
Daniel	Murray	
Jillian	Woodruff	
Drea	Smith	
Kimberly	Terry	
Tade	Cross	
Erica	Lopez	
Shannon	Scott	
Terrence A.	Lewis	
Tisha	Moorer	
Janiya	Odom	
Emma	Mcgonigle	
Julia	Wolhandler	
Steven A.	Rodriguez	
Rebekka	Halseth	
Rebecca	Heinsen	
Mason	Wiley	
James	Pagano	
Carly	Hirschberg	
Sharlene	Enriquez	

Tina  
Linda  
Rossana  
Kathleen  
Paul  
Mia

Hanford  
Morris  
Reis  
Campbell  
Luhouse  
Rsy

DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

M

C.

ΓΑ

L DISABILITIES COUNCIL







GROUP

CATION

INC. (DASH)

CIATION

M POLITICS PLATFORM)

QUALITY

AL SERVICES



DISABLED COMMUNITY AT LARGE

HTS OF THE DEAF









STUDIES DEPARTMENT

BOARD OF HEARING

E-ORGANIZER



RK

DEGREE OF LAW

FOR THE DEAF

INTEREST

E-ORGANIZER

ITER

ON SERVICES

Talila Lewis,

Sorry, I didn't write you sooner since I had been so busy with my job and some diligent commitments; and not a while ago I finally had my chance to reduce my clutter after I completed some of my projects.

As promised, I collected most Deaf inmates' information for the Sign On Letter, and they were very interested to receive your updated newsletters and also were eager to know about your diligent efforts to help ensure the TDCJ to provide us videophones. We do have TTY here, but it's inaccessible. I have tried to use it on a number of times, but I couldn't get through the Relay Service because it is totally inaccessible so, we gave up and allowed it become obsolete and untouchable and useless. But with videophone, we are going to pull up our sleeves and work together to achieve more fairness in the TDCJ's system as you can see it in the petition that I got you over thirty Deaf prisoners who want to see it happen. Contact them all, please.

I will get you 20 more Deaf prisoners' information for the Sign On Letter later, and I couldn't get their information and, most importantly, their signatures because they were asleep in their cells while I was already collecting all the Deaf prisoners who were in the dayroom. However, I'm going to ask the other twenty Deaf prisoners for their information and signatures, and then I'll send you the list. I think there are over sixty Deaf prisoners on this unit. Yes, I know that many, so let us think about the fairness all the Deaf prisoners do deserve, which is re-connect with their loved ones through an accessible telecommunications.

OK, please let me know if there is anything you need. Here's my new figure of "sign" speech... "Actually, I do have a sling but a rock." If you are familiar with one great story from the Old Testament, then you will perfectly well know what and who I am talking about. Take care of yourself and wish you well with your

Community Sign On Letter

- ① Renny Harvard, Renny Harvard # TDCJ # 11781687
- ② Juan Martinez, Juan Martinez # TDCJ # 536545
- ③ Jeremy Barron, Jeremy Barron # TDCJ # 1685441
- ④ Jimmie L. Roberson Jr, Jimmie L. Roberson # TDCJ # 1115426
- ⑤ Cigo Crews, Cigo Crews # 1133944
- ⑥ Tony McKnight, Tony McKnight 781305
- ⑦ Rene Espinoza, Rene Espinoza # 1769180
- ⑧ Melvin Easley, Melvin Easley # 795367
- ⑨ Darrell Fontelroy # 1810365
- ⑩ Jerry BELTON # 1755857 Jerry Belton
- ⑪ Wardell William Page II, # 1546562 Wardell Page
- ⑫ Donald Lee Reese # 752865 Donald Reese
- ⑬ Thomas Shawn # 1865562 Thomas Shawn
- ⑭ Frank Lewis # 1557851 Frank Lewis
- ⑮ Kevin Hudson JR 1843625 Kevin Hudson
- ⑯ Darrell Kentle 1841480 Darrell Kentle
- ⑰ Jose Aguilar 1514036 Jose Aguilar
- ⑱ Jerry Duenes 1381597 Jerry Duenes
- ⑲ E. YALCIN 1564681 E. Yalcin
- ⑳ Archie Smith 1483862 Archie Smith
- ㉑ Charles Shoemake 1340905 Charles Shoemake
- ㉒ David ANNESS # 1547113 David Anness
- ㉓ Torred SEARS # 1830504 Torred Sears
- ㉔ William Bryant # 1873420 William Bryant
- ㉕ Keisey Davis # 1211000 Keisey Davis



- ① Shane Evariste TDCJ # 01625623 Shane Evariste
- ② Gabriel Torres TDCJ # 1860061 Gabriel Torres
- ③ Darnell Lipscomb TDCJ # 1456044 Darnell Lipscomb
- ④ Aaron Mobley 1816116 Aaron Mobley
- ⑤ Terry McPade 1424554 Terry McPade
- ⑥ Alberto Arriaga # 1302571 Alberto Arriaga
- ⑦ Alfonso Josa # 487011 Alfonso Josa

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HEARD

P.O. Box 1160  
WASHINGTON, DC 20013

JAY DALDRIDGE AG-3432  
CSATF/SP G3-42-2<sup>nd</sup>  
P.O. Box 5244  
CORCORAN, CA. 93212

Dec. 8, 2013

Dear Talila Lewis, President of HEARD,

I really appreciate to have your help and voice at the FCC for the access to the videophone in the prison facility. We, the deaf inmates at CSATF, G-yard agreed earnestly with the Community Sign-On Letter. We also have a couple of questions and concerning with the four fundamental components of universally accessible Inmate Calling Service.

We are no longer interesting nor wanting to have TTY to be part of our accommodate need. Since the people at the CDCR's (Calif. Dept. of Correctional & Rehab.) attitude toward the telecommunicate device under the ADA law, which they are providing TTY is consider "reasonable" accommodation. It means we couldn't expect to have everything, as long we have TTY, thus we are stuck with it. I am asking you to focus on the videophone exclusively, disregard an obseleted TTY. Your reason may to have TTY be part of the letter for the inmates with hard of hearing and doesn't know any sign language, however they may would prefer using a VCO telecommunication device, not with a TTY anyway.

The videophone system required to have a High Speed Broadband internet line. It doesn't through a regular telephone system, so the videophone doesn't have a telephone billing system on the internet line. In the letter you requested to have the rates charged for the videophone calls. It may complicated our access with the videophone since our family, loved one, or friend using the videophone wouldn't able to collect the billing over internet calls. Why didn't you just leave it out, lessen the complication as well barrier upon the videophone system.

Thank you for the Quarterly Newsletter, my heart and thought to the family of McCoy Vernon. I had an opportunity to read his book called "Deadly Charm" and some of his articles. We have been benefit the information with the habeas corpus, and variety legal process. I'm thankful for his devotion to our community.

I'm looking forward to receive your respond on the questions we asked you in this letter. I also want to let you know I will be released this March, 2014. Please continue stay in-touch with the deaf inmates at CSATF.

Sincerely,

*D. BOOR*

ENCLOSED: HEARD's Community Sign-On  
Letter with inmates signatures

At base, the Commission must employ its authority to mandate that:

- (1) ICS providers ensure that deaf and hard of hearing prisoners, prisoners with deaf family members, and prisoners with speech challenges have access to videophones, captioned telephones, TTYs and other auxiliary aids;
- (2) ICS providers reduce rates charged for videophone and TTY such that family members of deaf prisoners pay the same amount for the same amount of communication;
- (3) ICS providers immediately add all relay numbers, including Spanish relay numbers, to its list of approved numbers; and
- (4) ICS providers assemble and report data regarding rates for and complaints from prisoners with disabilities and their family members.

Anything short of a Commission order mandating these four fundamental components of universally accessible Inmate Calling Services will leave countless prisoners and their family members exactly where they were prior to the Commission's decision—disconnected. Universal accessibility is part and parcel of fairness and the rights of people with disabilities should not be disregarded for regulatory convenience.

The Commission has the authority to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal telecommunication access and we are calling upon you to ensure that prison telecommunication is affordable *and* universally accessible—that fair reaches all, not some.

Sincerely,

Talila A. Lewis, President, HEARD

&

the Undersigned Individuals and Organizations

- TYSON HOPPER T-96471 *Tyson Hopper*
- JAY BALDRIDGE AG-3432 *J. Baldrige*
- Clemente De Leon #AB4912. *C. De Leon*
- Allen Fisher K75306 *Allen Fisher*
- Juan Rivera AD8230 *Juan Rivera*
- DuBoise Scarborough AE8111 *DuBoise*
- CHRIS GOMEZ F. 16107 *C. Gomez*
- FRANCISCO Sutiérrez F69808 *Francisco Sutiérrez*
- Quenton Thompson AD-8538 *Quenton Thompson*
- Robert W. Roseli *Robert W. Roseli*
- K. Michel E-03947 *K. Michel*
- Steven Rodriguez T-44411 *Steven Rodriguez*