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MAR 25 2014

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

December 9, 2013

Honorable Rick Scott, Governor
State of Florida, The Capitol
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001

RE: FCC Rate Caps

Honorable Governor:

Recently I wrote to you concerning the FCC's recently issued *Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Rates for Interstate Inmate Calling Services (ICS)* (WC Docket No. 12-375), issued on September 26, 2013. I explained that the ruling would adversely impact the jail, as well as my ability to provide many needed services to the inmates.

This is a follow-up to my letter, with more detailed statistics to emphasize the severe loss out jail would incur. For instance right now the annual revenue is projected to be around \$325,000 from the inmate phones. Our phone provider, Global Tel Link (GTL) would pay, per our current contract with them, 68% commissions. This means approximately \$221,000 is going into our Inmate Welfare Fund which is generated by inmate telephone calls. If the FCC were to regulate the cost of the phone calls to .7 ¢ per minute, it could reduce our commissions by half or two-thirds. Being unsure of what the FCC would charge in their final rates, we can only estimate that the impact to the current ruling for just the State to State long distance phone calls would be a loss of revenue of approximately \$5000 annually minimum.

If the FCC were to regulate *all* calls – those inside the state and local calls – it would be an even bigger loss. In fact, the impact could be so significant to these phone companies that they may very well go bankrupt or pull out of facilities because they will not be making any money. Should that happen where would that leave not just our jail, but so many others across the country? Right now at the Santa Rosa County Jail, GTL provides all of the equipment for inmates to be able to make phone calls at no costs to us. Considering the fact that our revenue from the calls is cut significantly, and if we had to buy the equipment and maintain it, then we would have to pay out of agency monies for inmates to have the privilege of making phone calls.

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Right now even though the estimated loss of revenue is \$5000 annually based on the current ruling for out-of-state calls, \$5000 a year will result in a significant reduction of inmate benefits. In a local economy where employees recently received their first raise in four years, inmate phone service could quickly become a luxury we could not afford to provide to the inmates. And as a law enforcement officer for many years I have seen the good results which can come from telephone communications between inmates and loved one. Please help jails keep this important communication tool for the inmates and their families.

Sincerely,

O. Wendell Hall
Sheriff of Santa Rosa County

WH/rjk
No enclosure