



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Brian Dolinar, Program Director, Independent Media Center 217-621-5827, briandolinar@ucimc.org
Michelle Jett, State Rep. Carol Ammons 217-531-1660, michelle@staterepCarolAmmons.com

Urbana, IL - In-person contact visits are now legally guaranteed in Illinois prisons, setting a new bar for preserving the rights and dignity of incarcerated individuals and their families. With the passage of [HB2738: Protect Prison Visits Bill](#), video calling will not replace, but will supplement, in-person visiting.

Introduced by Illinois State Representative Carol Ammons, and supported by the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center (UCIMC), HB2738 also ensures that the cost of video calling is reasonable and affordable. This is the companion bill to 2016's HB6200: The Family Connections Bill which cut in half the cost of traditional phone calls from prison. Both bills are a product of the partnership between Representative Ammons and the Campaign for Prison Phone Justice.

"I am proud to say Illinois is setting a national precedent for regulating this new technology. Strong family connections are a strong factor in reducing recidivism and simply a humane way to treat those serving sentences and their family members," said State Representative Carol Ammons (D-Urbana).

"We use our eyes to see, but our eyes see more than just figures. With our eyes we can see love, we can see pain, we can see joy. This bill will enable those incarcerated the opportunity to extend their love by reaching out to their families via video chats. Technology is advancing for the communities in the outside world and we cannot forget about the human beings removed from their communities and families. Again, we say thank you," shared Wandjell Harvey-Robinson, who grew up struggling to stay in contact with her parents who were both incarcerated.

HB2738 was signed into law by Governor Rauner in August and goes into effect January 1, 2018.

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UCIMC is a community center based in Urbana, Illinois with a mission to foster the creation and distribution of media and art that emphasizes underrepresented voices and perspectives. We are a member of the Campaign for Prison Phone Justice, and an anchor member of the Media Action Grassroots Network, housed at Center for Media Justice in Oakland.