



September 26, 2012

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Ex Parte disclosure pursuant to Docket No. 96-128.

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On September 24, 2012, the following individuals met with Commissioner Mignon Clyburn, Dave Grimaldi, Angela Kronenberg, Louis Peraertz, Deena Shettler, Victoria Goldberg, Pam Arluk, Lynne Engledow, Michael Steffen, Angela Giancarlo and Christine Kurth: Lee Petro, Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP, counsel for Martha Wright et al.; amalia deloney, Center for Media Justice; Nick Szuberla, Working Narratives; Philip Fornaci and Deborah Golden, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Lindsay Guetschow, Participant Media; Mrs. Martha Wright, Mr. Ulandis Forte, Mr. Jackie Lucas and Mrs. Viola Richardson Lucas of the Martha Wright Petition.

The first part of the meeting included a screening of Ava DuVernay's film, [Middle of Nowhere](#). Set to release on Oct. 12th, the film "chronicles a woman's separation from her incarcerated husband, revealing the challenges faced by families in staying connected to loved ones in prison and the effect on both parties." Lindsay Guetschow—from [Participant Media](#)—was present to talk about their social action partnership with MAG-Net which includes launching [The Wright to Call Home](#) website.

The second part of the meeting featured a community conversation. Gathered on the 8th floor—[Mrs. Martha Wright](#), her grandson Mr. Ulandis Forte and Mr. Jackie Lucas—three named plaintiffs from *Martha Wright vs. Corrections Corporation of America*—shared their personal stories related to the Wright Petition. These petitioners were joined by Mrs. Viola Richardson, (Lucas) who shared her perspective as a family member—but not a plaintiff—who was directly impacted. We provided the attached written materials which support our arguments in detail. In addition, the petitioners shared the following testimony:

- *"It hurt me that every call home meant a sacrifice my mother had to make. She went without so many things, to stay in touch with me." -Mr. Lucas*
- *"He'd call saying 'we won't talk but a minute' but he had three kids to talk to, and me. Three kids plus Mom? Ten minutes goes fast, and we could barely afford that." – Mrs. Richardson (Lucas)*
- *"He had to call his Mother. If she didn't hear from him, she'd end up at the doctor sick with worry or high blood pressure. He had to call her to keep her healthy." -Mrs. Richardson (Lucas)*



- *“My mother had to move in with my sister to pay the phone bills-\$500 a month was normal.” -Mr. Lucas*
- *“I’m 3 days away from 90 days out—after 18 years in. My grandmother is the greatest woman I have ever known. She kept in contact with me. I never thought I would be here, speaking to you all.” -Mr. Forte*
- *“My grandmother has been blind for 17 years. How was I supposed to write to her? She needed to hire someone just to read the letters. When I called, we could only afford 2-3 minutes.” -Mr. Forte*
- *“I’m 87 years old and still trying. He is my only and oldest grandson. I love him. I thank God for him (grandson). He found his way back home. The calls helped.” -Mrs. Wright*

This visit and screening were planned as part of a larger effort called the [Campaign for Prison Phone Justice](#), a national campaign seeking to lower the cost of prison phone calls led by the Media Action Grassroots Network, Prison Legal News and Working Narratives. We explained our belief that the current predatory rates deter regular telephone contact with stable family member and others in the community. Further, the petitioners shared the negative impact the lack of action by the FCC has created over nearly a decade. Like us, the petitioners asserted they continue to believe the FCC—as the only agency with jurisdiction the only agency with jurisdiction over long distance rates—is the correct venue to resolve this problem.

In closing we wanted to make sure the Commission pressed the Chairman to pursue this issue and for the Commission to make a final decision in the immediate future.

All those present expressed their appreciation to the FCC and staff for attending the screening and community conversation.

Sincerely,

amalia deloney,
Associate Director, Center for Media Justice

cc: Commissioner Mignon Clyburn, Dave Grimaldi, Angela Kronenberg, Louis Peraertz, Deena Shettler, Victoria Goldbert, Pam Arluk, Lynne Engledow, Michael Steffan, Angela Giancarlo and Christine Kurth