

This, is a public comment for the Wright Petition (CC Docket #96-128)

MR. DORRAY COOPER # 0804440
ASP 406 North High Street
Anamosa, Iowa 52205-~~137~~²²⁴⁰

Received & Inspected

JUL 25 2012

FCC Mail Room

July 07-07 2012

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
Public Comments
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski;

I am an inmate at the Anamosa State Penitentiary and I am writing this letter in support of the Wright Petition (CC Docket #96-128).

As an inmate, I and my family are being gouged with outrageous connection fee and per minute rates. I say my family as they are the ones who usually place the money on my telephone account.

In Iowa, all inmates must make calls using the state owned telephone system. We are charged a \$2.00 connection fee for all in-state calls plus a per minute rate from 19¢ to 28¢ per minute, depending on the area code you are calling.

When placing a call out-of-state, you are charged a \$3.00 connection fee and 25¢ and up per minute. All calls are for 20 minutes.

I am hoping that this letter will prompt your commission to make the State of Iowa lower both the connection fee and per minute costs for all inmates.

Thank you for your time and attention to this support letter.

Sincerely,

Dorray Cooper

JUL 25 2012

FCC Mail Room

7-19-12

Dear Chairman Genachowski
This is a public comment
for the Wright Petition
(CC DOCKET # 96-128)

The price of inmate
phone calls is ridiculously
high and causes a severe
rift in my family
connectedness. Please
regulate Prison phone
calls

Sincerely
James Petrus

See enclosure for
43¢ a minute rates
Rate \$6⁴⁵ for a 15-minute call

From: Nat Hodge #6008057
Topeka Correctional Facility
815 SE Rice Rd.
Topeka, KS 66607

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comment for the
Wright Petition
CC Docket # 96-128

Dear Chairman Genachowski,

I've been incarcerated since June 8, 2009. Phone calls have been rare due to the cost.

While I was in the county jail, it wasn't such a big deal because my family (mom + 2 daughters) lived only 20 mins (or less) from the jail + could visit often.

Since coming to Topeka Correctional Facility Oct. 21, 2010, I can count on one hand how many times I've heard the voices of my mom + kids. The 45-50 min. drive from Wyandotte County to Topeka is too much for my mom who began battling cancer last year. She doesn't have the money for gas, car maintenance or even money to be buying phone time. We've talked on the phone 2X since Oct. 2010!

When my child's father sends me money, I buy at least \$10 in phone time. That only gives me 20 mins. to talk. Trying to split that up evenly between him + my mom + kids is nearly impossible!

Our phone rates are RIDICULOUS!!
Something needs to change.

Thanks for advocating.
God bless you.

Natasha Hodge

Received & Inspected

JUL 25 2012

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Dear chair man Grenachowski

I am writing to explain how
the high costs of prison calls have impacted
my family. I am a single mother of 2
boys, and my father who is incarcerated
are the only male figure in their life.
I cant afford to pay the high cost of the
phone calls. It really is causing a burden
on my family. If there is a way to lower
the cost of the prison calls I would
appreciate it.

Sincerely yours

The Johnson family

This is a public comment for the Wright Petition (CC Docket #96-128)

Byron Morales 1090499

ASP 406 North High Street

Anamosa, Iowa 52205-1157

July 7, 2012

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JUL 25 2012

FCC Mail Room

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
Public Comments
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski;

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As an inmate, I and my family are being gouged with outrageous connection fee and per minute rates. I say my family as they are the ones who usually place the money on my telephone account.

In Iowa, all inmates must make calls using the state owned telephone system. We are charged a \$2.00 connection fee for all in-state calls plus a per minute rate from 19¢ to 28¢ per minute, depending on the area code you are calling.

When placing a call out-of-state, you are charged a \$3.00 connection fee and 25¢ and up per minute. All calls are for 20 minutes.

I am hoping that this letter will prompt your commission to make the State of Iowa lower both the connection fee and per minute costs for all inmates.

Thank you for your time and attention to this support letter.

Sincerely,

Byron Morales

July 7 2012

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Chairman Julius Genachowski

FCC Mail Room

The Practice of charging outrageous amounts for inmate calls has been going on for years. Started at the County Jail in Des Moines. I recall the Des Moines Register printing an article about the thousands of dollars in revenue that they made in a single year. Of course inmates in county jail have to use the phone to place collect calls to family and attorneys. Yet the rates were very high - Now for years here at these institutions; Fort Madison Clarinda Correctional Facility and Anamosa State Penitentiary. I simply could not afford to continue making calls to my family and friends nor attorney - Each call is at minimum \$6.00 for 15 minutes, this may sound affordable to people out of a prison, but to us inmates who only make \$20 to \$40.00 a month this amount is huge - 3 calls is around 20 dollars That's a lot for us - For over 4 years I simply stopped calling my friends and family. I know they could help by sending me money but it is not fair to them to pay such high rates to hear our voices - Please compare how much other states are charging for these services. I imagine that this is a money maker for many states, taking advantage of inmates' need to contact their loved ones -

Truly
Byron Morales

" This is a public comment for the Wright petition
- (CC. Docket # 96-128) "

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JUL 25 2012

7-16-12

FCC Mail Room

Dear Chairman Genachowski,

Up until around 2007
the jails and prisons here in Michigan had been charging
extortion like prices for collect calls. These being the
only type of calls inmates were allowed to make.
This equated to around \$9.00 per 15-minute call, and it
only got worse if it was long distance. These costs fell
strictly of the ones who we needed to call, thereby
exploiting our loved ones. It was like this for decade
so you know ~~exactly~~ their profit margins had to be in
the billions

Around 2007 M.D.O.C. brought in a debit system
where we could pre-pay calls, bringing the price to the
civilized amount of 10¢ per minute. But now since
then, using one excuse or another, they have caused the
rates to raise higher and higher again - (Its now at 28¢
per minute). We inmates do not have good paying jobs
and in order to keep in contact with our loved ones
(besides writing letters which takes days) - this unjust
price falls is their burden!

Thank you for your time,
Dennis Henderson

To:
Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communication Commission
Public Comments
445 12TH Street S.W.
Washington, D.C., 20554

Received & Inspected
JUL 25 2012
FCC Mail Room

From:
Nathan Dallas Brightman #781425
Washington State Department Of Corrections
Stafford Creek Correction Center
191 Constatine Way
Aberdeen, WA, 98520

Re: Wright Petition (Docket 96-128)

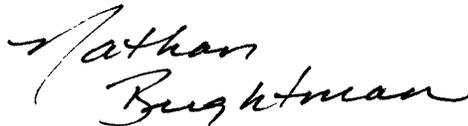
Dear Chairmen Genachowski,

I am writing in regards to a petition that is going around in the prison systems regarding the extremely high costs of the phone call charged to inmates and their family. I have been in prison for over 14 years, and in the time I have been incarcerated myself and my family has had to have spent 30,000\$ dollars on the phone. I have a very supportive family that enjoys the conversation that we have, and are willing to go with out things they need in order to budget for a phone call that costs ten times that of a normal phone call. The fairness is evidently not there. As an inmate, I make 32¢ and hour, and have to work eleven hours just to have a twenty minute phone call with my children. Even if I wanted to take the burden of the bill from the ones that I love, the pay scale in prison does not allow me to do

so. The people that support inmates are the ones that pay taxes every year. They are the men and woman that work in your community, serve you and your family at the stores your frequent. They are WE THE PEOPLE. They should not be punished for the love they have for a family member that was imprisoned. The cost of keeping in phone contact with a loved one in prison is just that, a punishment. But it is a punishment for the law abiding citizen that has a love and loyalty to family. The phone companies know that love will drive a brokenhearted mother that is struggling to pay for medication, to pay an exorbitant price to hear that her son is safe and alive. There is not much fairness to that, or to the fact that these companies are rewarded for preying on the emotions of people by being able to inflate the prices year after year. The system needs a new face and stronger regulations to protect people from the companies that monopolize markets that restrict inmates from seeking better deals or lower prices. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Nathan Dallas Brightman #781425

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nathan Brightman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

THURSDAY MORNING 19TH JULY, 2012
7:00 AM EL DORADO - CENTRAL A2-107
EL DORADO, KANSAS 67042-0311
(316) - 321 - 7284

FROM: Mr. Michael L. Gaines
EDCF - Central
P.O. Box 311
El Dorado, Kansas 67042-0311

Received & Inspected

JUL 25 2012

FCC Mail Room

TO: Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
Public Comments
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE- SUPPORT, prison phone justice campaign

"Dear Chairman Genachowski,"

I am currently incarcerated in the Supermax at the EDCF-C in Eldorado, Kansas serving 162 (one hundred, sixty-two) months, I've ^{been} down since 2008, however I was arrested in May 24, 2007. The same expensive phone calls were in the Sedgwick County Detention Facility in Wichita, Kansas.

Once upon a time in 1980 when Southwestern Bell was in Business the phone calls were affordable. Fast forward the 21ST century, the Industrial Prison Complex, in modern day era has been continued built by convicts and prisoners families and love ones Kith and also Kin and friends. By their financial supporting and tax-paying dollars

by supporting those of us in prison, when excepting outrageous expensive phone calls paid fees and services or paid fees and costs."

Kansas Department of Corrections provider for convict telephone service is EMBARQ and also prepaid collect established online at www.icsolutions.com, are expensive. For example EMBARQ NEW CALLING RATES

COLLECT

Call Type	Surcharge	Per Minute Fee
Local:	\$ 2.61	\$0.00
Intralata:	\$ 2.30	\$0.10
Intrastate:	\$ 1.96	\$0.41
Interstate:	\$ 1.70	\$0.40

The called party will not be charged any monthly billing fees by Embarg associated with collect calls.

PRE-PAID COLLECT

Call Type	Surcharge	Per Minute Fee
Local:	\$ 2.19	\$0.00
Intralata:	\$ 1.86	\$0.09
Intrastate:	\$ 1.27	\$0.38
Interstate:	\$ 1.30	\$0.35
International:	\$ 1.30	\$0.35

The called party will not be charged any set-up or processing fees by Embarg associated with pre-paid collect accounts

Pre-paid collect accounts may also be set up online at no cost.

Inmate Pre-Pay Calling Rates

Call Type	Surcharge	Per-Minute Rate
Local	\$1.96	\$0.00
Intralata/Intrastate	\$1.73	\$0.07
Interlata/Intrastate	\$1.47	\$0.31
Interlata/Interstate	\$1.28	\$0.30
International	\$1.28	\$0.30

- Inmate pre-pay calling can be purchased in \$10.00 denominations

My Family Sisters and Brothers one (1) is retired and on a regular basis place \$35 - thirty-five dollars denominations, however the call is to the state of Washington, and the cost and rates are very expensive. "My other sister lives in Wichita, Kansas and the calls are very expensive also." My youngest brother just recently moved into a house in Oklahoma, and him and my sister-in-law both have jobs. However at this time both cannot afford to except collect calls. At first my Brother and his wife were putting \$35⁰⁰ thirty-five dollars on the phone, that lasted from December 2011 - to - March 13, 2012.

CONCLUSION: EMBARQ and its team member Inmate Calling Solutions have continued to bleed my family dollars, tax-paying hard working people and law abiding citizens are being exploited. "These tactics must cease and desist immediately."

RESPECTFULLY Submitted
Mr. Michael L. Gaines

the state plans to return all out-of-state prisoners within 4 years. "Due to realignment, the implementation of the inmate classification score system, and other infill projects ... all offenders will be returned to California," the report said. "This plan eliminates the use of all out-of-state contract facilities by 2015-16."

The CDCR report noted that "Upon full implementation of this plan, the elimination of the out-of-state contract beds will result in a reduction of \$318 million General Fund and over 400 positions from the department's budget."

According to the report, the out-of-state prisoner population would be reduced to 9,038 by 2012-13; to 4,969 by 2013-14; to 1,864 by 2014-15; and to 531 by 2015-16, with a complete phase out by the end of 2016.

CCA has a significant stake in California, as the state accounted for 13% of the company's total revenue in 2010. Thus, CCA has courted California lawmakers – mainly through donations to their election campaigns. From 2003 to 2010, CCA officials and the company's Political Action Committee contributed over half a million dollars to political candidates, incumbents and parties in California; the majority of those funds went to 75 candidates between 2008 and 2010.

Despite such corporate largess, the anticipated CDCR contracts that CCA touted in its November 8, 2010 press release never came to pass. Unable to fill its Prairie Correctional Facility in Minnesota, CCA was forced to keep the prison closed; it had been shuttered in February 2010 after Minnesota and Washington State pulled their prisoners out.

The company had hoped to reopen the 1,600-bed facility by stocking it with California prisoners, but not only did that not happen, it now looks like CCA will lose its existing contracts with the CDCR to house approximately 9,500 out-of-state prisoners. This will have a negative impact on CCA's revenue but will be a positive step for the thousands of prisoners returned to California, who will be closer to their families.

"The California experience shows that states can save money and maintain public safety by carefully reducing their prison populations instead of paying private for-profit corporations millions of dollars," said Don Specter, director of the Prison Law Office.

Sources: *Minnesota Independent*, CCA press release, *Sacramento Bee*, <http://californiawatch.org>, www.insidecca.com

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Texas Prison System Increases Prisoners' Monthly Phone Minutes

by Matt Clarke

In 2007, when Texas became the last state in the nation to let prisoners make phone calls on a regular basis, the limit on phone usage was 120 minutes a month. [See: *PLN*, Nov. 2007, p.11]. Two years later the Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ) responded to requests by prisoners' families and doubled the monthly phone minute allotment to 240. In 2011 the Texas legislature considered, but ultimately did not adopt, an amendment that would have increased the number of minutes to 480; regardless, the limit on phone usage was upped anyway.

Not surprisingly, Texas officials have not increased the number of phone minutes solely for the benefit of prisoners and their families, for whom phone calls are a primary means of communication. Rather, the reason for allowing additional phone minutes is strictly financial. The legislature needs to plug a large budget deficit and money from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) phone system is an attractive source.

Currently, phone calls from Texas state prisoners cost \$.234/minute for debit in-state phone calls (\$.26/minute for collect or prepaid) and \$.387/minute for debit out-of-state calls (\$.43/minute for collect or prepaid). While those rates are significantly less than those charged in other state prison systems, they are still higher than rates paid by the general public.

Of course the state gets a hefty kickback from the TDCJ phone contract – 40% of the gross revenue, with some of that money earmarked for the Crime Victims Compensation Fund. Thus, the more calls that prisoners make, the greater the amount of revenue and the greater the kickback to the state. This led Rep. Jerry Madden to introduce an amendment to Senate Bill 1 (2011) that would have increased the number of allotted phone minutes to 480 per month, by amending Texas Government Code § 495.027(d).

"This is an easy way to raise money for the state," said Madden.

Complicating the revenue-generating rationale behind increasing the number of allotted phone minutes is the fact that many prisoners do not even use 240 minutes per month. This is likely due to restrictions placed on the TDCJ phone

system – for example, prisoners can only call up to ten people included on their visitation list, who must go through a bureaucratic registration process. Additionally, phone calls to cell phones are not allowed; thus, people without landlines are unable to receive calls from prisoners.

Still, providing prisoners with more phone minutes, regardless of the motivation of state officials, is beneficial and conducive to increased communication between prisoners and their families and friends. Unfortunately, Rep. Madden's amendment to increase the number of phone minutes to 480 was excluded from the final enrolled version of Senate Bill 1. The bill did include a provision to charge Texas prisoners a \$100 annual fee for medical care, replacing the prior co-pay system; that change went into effect in

September 2011. [See: *PLN*, April 2012, p.24].

Despite the demise of Rep. Madden's amendment, the TDCJ decided in mid-May 2011 to modify the phone system to let prisoners make up to 500 minutes of phone calls each month. Calls are still limited to 15 minutes each, and the other restrictions described above still apply.

If the restrictions were changed to decouple TDCJ prisoners' phone number lists from their visitation lists, and to allow calls to cell phones, revenue from the prison phone system would likely skyrocket despite the costly per-minute rates. ■

Sources: *Texas Tribune*, www.prisontalk.com, <http://lgritsforbreakfast.blogspot.com>, www.tdcj.state.tx.us, www.texasprisonphone.com

Oklahoma Taxpayers Foot \$13.5 Million Settlement Bill for Sexual Abuse by Jailers

by David M. Reutter

The general public typically shows little concern about abuse and corruption in jails and prisons, at least until it affects them personally. That was the case when residents in Delaware County, Oklahoma attended a November 2011 meeting of the County Commission and learned they may face an increase in property taxes to satisfy a settlement in a lawsuit that accused county jailers of raping and molesting female prisoners.

"We alleged the sheriff permitted his jail to be a sexual romper room," said R. Thomas Seymour, an attorney representing 15 former female prisoners who were held at the Delaware County Jail (DCJ). The women were incarcerated between 2005 and 2010 on charges that ranged from drug and alcohol-related offenses to assault and larceny.

Seymour's law firm, Seymour & Graham, with the Garrett Law Office, had previously represented female prisoners who were sexually abused by Custer County, Oklahoma Sheriff Michael Burgess, who was convicted and sentenced to 79 years in prison. [See: *PLN*, March 2012, p.24; Sept. 2009, p.36; May 2009, p.1].

At the center of the Delaware County allegations were DCJ Administrator Lonnie Hunter and jail volunteer Bill Sanders, Sr. The lawsuit alleged that Hunter and Sanders had raped and sexually groped female prisoners when driving them to doctor appointments or while the women were in their cells or shower areas. It also claimed other jailers would "bargain" with prisoners to expose their breasts in exchange for food, cigarettes, candy and personal items. Sheriff Jay Blackfox was accused of covering for his employees and ignoring prisoners' complaints.

"I did not cover up anything," said Blackfox, who was elected in 2004. "I would not have tolerated any type of sexual misconduct out of my staff."

Sheriff Blackfox acknowledged that he received a letter of complaint in 2008 from female prisoners, which he said he immediately turned over, along with witness statements, to the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation. An investigation was opened and a report sent to Delaware County District Attorney Eddie Wyant. Citing insufficient evidence, Wyant declined to prosecute at that time.