

FILED/ACCEPTED

DEC 22 2008

From: Stephen Munkelt [smunk@gv.net]
Sent: Saturday, December 20, 2008 4:33 PM
Cc: Amy Bender; Penny Nance; Scott Bergmann; scott.duetzman@fcc.gov; Nicholas Alexander; Chris Moore; Dana Shaffer; randy.clark@fcc.gov; Marcus Maher; Albert Lewis; Pamela Arluk; Lynne Engledow
Subject: Wright Alternative Rulemaking Proposal

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

FILED/ACCEPTED

DEC 22 2008

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Re: Wright Alternative Rulemaking Proposal
C.C. Docket 96-128;

Dear Ms. Dortch:

I am an attorney, and a criminal law specialist, in California. I live in Nevada City, Nevada County, California. However, I frequently represent the accused in criminal cases over a 6-county area of Northeastern California, including Sacramento.

When my clients - or potential clients - are in custody at jails or prisons I accept calls from them. As you know these are always "collect inmate calls" which are charged at uniquely high rates. No matter where they are locked up, the calls are always the most expensive ones on my bill. This is an added expense for my practice, but the real impact is on the spouses, family and friends of the inmates. Time and again I hear of bills in the hundreds of dollars, and phones disconnected for non-payment. This leaves those who are already in very difficult situations with the law, and the hazards of jail life, without any personal or emotional support. It also leaves wives, husbands, children and family bereft, and grief stricken at the separation from the inmate.

Apparently one reason this rate is so high is because commissions are paid by prison phone service providers to correctional facilities. I believe these commissions are an unfair tax on families of inmates, including many who cannot afford these outrageous (or excessive, or exorbitant, or painfully high, or whatever words you believe best describes the) rates. I also believe the lack of any political "voice" for these persons encourages rate-abuse.

It is my understanding that a recent cost study submitted by prison phone service companies has determined a "fair rate" that eliminates commissions, covers legitimate costs and provides a reasonable return for prison and jail phone companies while dramatically reducing call rates. I hope is that the FCC will prohibit the payment of commissions and establish a "fair rate" for all intrastate and inter-state inmate calls, as well as require availability of less expensive prepaid or debit calling in all correctional facilities.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Munkelt.

No. of Copies rec'd 0
List A B C D E