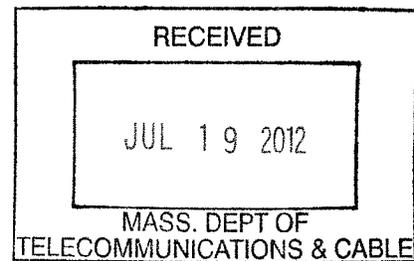


TO: Alphonse Kamanzi  
Prisoners' Legal Services

FR: John Feroli, W-42512  
Old Colony Prison

DT: July 4, 2012



RE: Rates and Quality of Service of Prison Telephones

I am presently housed at the Old Colony Prison in Bridgewater, MA where I have been incarcerated after being transferred from the Souza-Baranowski Prison in Shirley, MA in August 2008.—I feel it's important to note this point to illustrate that the problems with the phone service aren't confined to any one facility.

When I was in the maximum security prison in Shirley, SBCC, over the holidays in 2006-2008 I always called my whole family on Christmas morning. However, on this particular morning, only a few moments after the call was accepted a recording would interrupt to advise me that my call was being terminated because I attempted to use a custom calling feature. I called back only to get the same message each time I called a family member. And, of course, each time I call back my family incurs another connection fee. As a result, I immediately contacted my state representative in East Bridgewater and a family friend who's a member of the Governor's Council, Carol Fiola. I explained exactly what happened and advised them that it was my belief that this was a deliberate act to generate as much money as possible. Shortly thereafter I was summoned to the office of the Inner Perimeter Security. Lt. Gatewood advised me that he received calls and letters from the state representative and Council member in response to my complaint and he was investigating my claim. He first confirmed that I never attempted to use three-way calling, call forwarding or any other custom feature. He next confirmed that I had in fact, been disconnected thirteen (13) times on Christmas morning. He advised me that the phones reception was too sensitive and the background noise in the cellblock was being misinterpreted as a custom calling feature. Yet, the problem persisted after my complaint.

On another occasion while in SBCC I put \$10.00 in my phone account and waited for the money to be transferred. After more than a week I contacted the treasurer through the C.O. in the block. It was confirmed that the money was transferred to GTL but a recording advised me each time I attempted to make a pre-paid call that there were insufficient funds in my phone account. The block C.O. then contacted the IPS, and as I waited for the C.O. to complete his phone conversation with the IPS he was writing down money-amounts on a scrap piece of paper. When he got off the phone he handed me the piece of paper and told me that the ten dollars was used on phone calls made on the dates, and in the amounts he had written down. There were, however, two major problems; 1) I never made the calls, and; 2) more importantly, it is impossible to accrue the amounts he noted for a pre-paid call.—Two of the amounts he claimed that I spent on calls

Alphonse Kamanzi,  
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were \$2.56 and \$2.86. In other words, the maximum amount for a full 20 minute pre-paid call is \$2.26, and there is absolutely no way to spend a penny more. The amounts that he had written could be incurred on a collect call as the rates are different.

I contacted the Superintendent Thomas Dickhaut, he admitted that a "mistake" had been made, and my ten dollars would be returned to me. It never was!

I will admit that the problems with the phones at Old Colony aren't quite as bad, and the tactics employed to increase revenue not nearly as underhanded. Yet, problems still exist. Those problems consist mostly of dropped calls. For no apparent reason the called person is no longer on the other end of the line and I find myself talking to no one until I realize we've been disconnected. I call back only to be disconnected again, and incur another connection fee.

Considering the fact that the DOC gets such a large kickback from the phone company, (40%, I believe), and considering the DOC's track record for honesty, integrity and transparency, there's no doubt in the hearts and minds of every prisoner and their families that any and every underhanded, dishonest and dispicable tactic to increase revenue will be employed by this agency. In other words, the phone "problems" are intentional.

I've been in prison since October 1984, and my mother is now 81 years old. She's on a fixed income, and after 47 years in the same home is being threatened with foreclosure by a different dispicable agency, a predatory lender. My family, like most prisoners' families aren't wealthy and they struggle just to make ends meet. And between the recent price increase in the inmate canteen, the slave wages we're paid, the poor quality of **everything** provided by this retributive industry, and the fact that our families have to sometimes choose between food and medication because they can't afford both, the DOC is only making inmates and their families feel desperate and angry. And all of it will undoubtedly result in a higher rate of recidivism. Which is exactly what the DOC and their vendors want.—My only comfort rests in the knowledge that a very special place in hell awaits them all.

My name is John Feroli, and as always,  
I approve this message.



John Feroli, W-42512  
Old Colony Prison  
Bridgewater, MA