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6/25/12

DEAR MS. TENNERICL/O:

MY NAME IS RUSSELL DEMELLO, MSA # 0656345, AN INMATE AT THE WORCESTER COUNTY HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS. I HAVE BEEN IN HERE SINCE NOVEMBER OF 2011 AND HAVE ONLY RECEIVED 2 VISITS BECAUSE MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS LIVE IN RI AND DARTMOUTH, MA, WHICH ARE VERY FAR TO VISIT.

I AM WRITING IN REGARDS TO A PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE I RECEIVED ON PRISON TELEPHONE RATES AND QUALITY OF SERVICE (OR LACK THEREOF). THE TELEPHONE SERVICE PROVIDER HERE IS SECURUS AND PRIOR TO COMING HERE, I WAS IN WALPOLE PRISON AND THE SERVICE THERE WAS GLOBAL TELLINK. THE PHONE IS MOSTLY THE ONLY WAS OF REAL COMMUNICATION WITH MY FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND MY CHILDREN BECAUSE OF THE LONG DISTANCE FOR VISITS. EVEN THOUGH I AM INCARCERATED, BEING CLOSE TO MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS IS IMPORTANT TO ME AND NOT BEING ABLE TO CALL THEM, BECAUSE OF THE OUTRAGEOUS CHARGES, ONLY

PUSHES THEM AWAY. I HAVE SENT MONEY HOME OR HAVE HAD FAMILY SPEND ANYWHERE FROM $3,000-$4,000 JUST ON CALLS. ONE 15-20 MINUTE CALL TO RHODE ISLAND COSTS APPROXIMATELY $25.00. ALSO WHEN I DO GET TO MAKE CALLS, THE QUALITY IS HORRIBLE AND SOME TIMES I GET CUT OFF IN THE MIDDLE OR DISCONNECTED AND FORCED TO CALL BACK AND AM CHARGED DOUBLE.

THERE IS ALSO ANOTHER ISSUE HERE AT THE JAIL WITH COMMISSARY. THE COMPANY THAT PROVIDES THE COMMISSARY SERVICE PRICE GOUGES ON THE MOST COMMONLY PURCHASED ITEMS AND CONSTANTLY RAISES PRICES ON THESE ITEMS BY AT LEAST 10%. FOR EXAMPLE, I PAY $.95 FOR A RAMEN SOUP THAT IN ANY STORE WOULD COST $.10-$.20 EACH. THEY ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF INMATES AND INMATES' FAMILY AND FRIENDS AT THE EXPENSE OF OUR HARD SHIP. I APPRECIATE YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE TO US. SINCERELY,