



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 453

January Session, 2021

Senate Bill No. 972

Senate, April 14, 2021

The Committee on Judiciary reported through SEN. WINFIELD of the 10th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE COST OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Commissioner of
2 Correction shall not use the provision of voice communication service
3 or any other communication service to persons who are in the custody
4 of the commissioner and confined in a correctional facility to supplant
5 in-person contact visits any such person may be eligible to receive.

6 (b) On and after October 1, 2022, the commissioner shall provide
7 voice communication service to persons who are in the custody of the
8 commissioner and confined in a correctional facility. The commissioner
9 may supplement such voice communication service with any other
10 communication service, including, but not limited to, video
11 communication and electronic mail services. Any such communication
12 service shall be provided free of charge to such persons and any
13 communication, whether initiated or received through any such service,
14 shall be free of charge to the person initiating or receiving the

15 communication.

16 (c) On and after October 1, 2022, the state shall not receive revenue
17 for the provision of any communication service to any person in the
18 custody of the commissioner and confined in a correctional facility.

19 Sec. 2. Sections 18-81x and 54-105a of the general statutes are
20 repealed. (*Effective October 1, 2022*)

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2022</i>	Repealer section

JUD *Joint Favorable*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$
Correction, Dept.	GF - Cost	None	3.5-4.5 million
Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection; Correction, Dept.; Judicial Dept.	Technical Services Revolving Fund - Revenue Loss	None	4.5-5.5 million
Correction, Dept.	GF - Potential Cost	None	See Below
Correction, Dept.	GF - Potential Revenue Loss	None	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the Department of Correction (DOC) to provide telephone services for inmates free of charge beginning October 1, 2022 and results in various costs and revenue losses to the state. Currently, inmates pay for each call and a portion of that money compensates the vendor for providing the service and the remainder goes to the state to fund various programs.

Cost Impact:

- It will cost DOC approximately \$3.5 to \$4.5 million to compensate the vendor for the telephone services beginning in FY 23¹. The exact cost will depend on the inmate call volume

¹ The FY 23 cost reflects 9 months due to the October 1, 2022 start date.

which could potentially increase due to the fees being removed, inmate population which has been decreasing in recent years, and any future adjustments to the contract between the State and the vendor.

- There is a potential cost to the extent the Commissioner of DOC adds video communication and electronic mail services for inmates because the bill dictates that these services shall be free of charge².

Revenue Impact:

- The bill results in an approximate \$4.5 to \$5.5 million revenue loss to the state in FY 23³. This money goes to DOC for expanding inmate educational services and reentry program initiatives, and the remainder pays for criminal justice information system (in DESPP) and for probation staffing in the Judicial Department.
- There is a potential revenue loss to the extent the Commissioner of DOC adds video communication and electronic mail services for inmates because the bill prohibits the DOC from receiving revenue for phone or telecommunications services.

The Out Years

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 24 \$	FY 25 \$	FY 26 \$
Correction, Dept. (DOC88000)	GF - Cost	4.5-5.5 million	4.5-5.5 million	4.5-5.5 million
Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DPS32000); Correction, Dept.	Technical Services Revolving Fund - Revenue Loss	6-7 million	6-7 million	6-7 million

² Tablets are currently provided to a limited number of inmates. Some of the services on the tablets are provided free of charge while others have a cost.

³ The FY 23 revenue loss reflects 9 months due to the October 1, 2022 start date.

(DOC88000); Judicial Dept. (JUD95000)				
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Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

The annualized cost for paying the vendor for telephone services is approximately \$4.5 to \$5.5 million per year and the annualized revenue loss is \$6 to \$7 million per year. The exact cost and revenue loss will depend on the inmate call volume which could potentially increase due to the fees being removed, inmate population which has been decreasing in recent years, and any future adjustments to the contract between the State and the vendor.

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 972*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE COST OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires, starting October 1, 2022, the Department of Correction (DOC) to provide telephone services for inmates in correctional facilities and allows the commissioner to supplement phone services with other telecommunications services, including video communication and email. Any communication service the commissioner provides must be free of charge to the inmates and to the people who initiate or receive the communication.

The bill prohibits (1) the DOC commissioner from supplanting in-person contact visits inmates are eligible to receive with phone or other communication services and (2) DOC from receiving revenue for phone or telecommunications service to inmates on and after October 1, 2022.

The bill also repeals the laws requiring the Department of Administrative Services to transfer some of the revenue derived from inmate phone calls to:

1. the judicial department for probation transition program and technical violation unit staff and services and
2. DOC to expand inmate educational services and re-entry initiatives.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the repealer section is effective on October 1, 2022.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 24 Nay 13 (03/29/2021)