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For Immediate Release

**FCC ADOPTS SUSTAINABLE, AFFORDABLE
INMATE CALLING RATES**

WASHINGTON, August 4, 2016 – The Federal Communications Commission today took additional steps to ensure that inmate calling service rates are just, reasonable and fair for inmates and their families, and that jails, prisons and providers are fairly compensated for the costs of providing the service.

The Order adopted by the Commission builds on its landmark inmate calling service reforms of 2013 and 2015 by responding to issues raised in the record of the proceeding since then. The FCC’s careful review showed that a modest increase in the rate caps set in 2015 is warranted. By covering the legitimate costs of jails and prisons, this adjustment will ensure continued availability and development of inmate calling services, while still resulting in significant savings for inmates and their families.

The rate caps adopted today are, on average, significantly lower than the 2013 interim rate cap of 21 cents a minute that currently applies to interstate long-distance calls. The new caps will govern both in-state and interstate calling, reducing the price for most inmates of an average 15-minute call by nearly 35 percent. The FCC’s inmate calling rate cap functions as a ceiling, not a floor, and so does not prevent states where calling costs are lower from reducing rates further.

The Order adjusts the FCC’s 2015 rate caps, which were blocked by a court stay pending appeal. Recognizing higher costs in small institutions, the new rates for debit/prepaid calls are as follows (2015 rate caps in parentheses):

- State or federal prisons: 13 cents/minute (11 cents/minute)
- Jails with 1,000 or more inmates: 19 cents/minute (14 cents/minute)
- Jails with 350-999 inmates: 21 cents/minute (16 cents/minute)
- Jails of up to 349 inmates: 31 cents/minute (22 cents/minute)

Rates for collect calls are slightly higher in the first year and will be phased down to these caps after a two-year transition period. Approximately 71 percent of inmates reside in state or federal prisons, and approximately 85 percent of inmates reside in institutions with populations exceeding 1,000.

Action by the Commission August 4, 2016 by Order on Reconsideration (FCC 16-102).
Chairman Wheeler, Commissioners Clyburn and Rosenworcel approving. Commissioners Pai

and O’Rielly dissenting. Chairman Wheeler, Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel, Pai and O’Rielly issuing separate statements.

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).