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**For Immediate Release****STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS ON THE PASSING  
OF THE MARTHA WRIGHT-REED JUST AND REASONABLE  
COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 2022**

WASHINGTON, December 22, 2022 — Today, Congress passed the bipartisan Martha Wright-Reed Just and Reasonable Communications Act of 2022, which restores the Commission’s authority to ensure service providers charge “just and reasonable rates” for intrastate and interstate calls and other communications methods used by incarcerated individuals in correctional facilities.

The legislation is the result of the dedication of the late Martha Wright, who led the charge in 2003 to create positive change and ensure families with incarcerated individuals had the ability to stay in contact with their loved ones by eliminating the burden of exorbitant inmate calling rates. This effort has been since spearheaded through the continued leadership of Senator Tammy Duckworth to protect incarcerated individuals from predatory activities.

Commissioner Starks issued the following statement:

“Jails and prisons have charged predatory rates to incarcerated individuals for far too long. Today’s action ensures the Commission has clear authority to act to ensure that rates charged for incarcerated individuals are just and reasonable no matter the phone technology used to make the call or whether the call crosses state lines. I hope the Commission moves quickly to implement the rulemaking as required by the statute soon after President Biden signs the legislation.

Contact with the outside world for incarcerated populations is not only a vital part of the rehabilitation process but it also provides a multitude of benefits, including an overall decline in recidivism. Today’s action is also a win for equity — for many, the price to connect with their loved ones is far too costly.

I wish to congratulate Senator Duckworth, as well as her co-sponsors, Senators Blumenthal, Booker, Casey, Coons, Gillibrand, King, Klobuchar, Lujan, Markey, Portman, Schatz, Warren, and Wyden on this historic achievement. Through their leadership, as well as the efforts of the National Sheriff’s Association, the FCC is poised to ensure that everyone has the ability to communicate and just and reasonable rates, along with the many positive benefits that contact with family and friends brings to those reentering public life.”

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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).*