

Dear Oregon legislators,

Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony on HB 3118. My name is Ruth Perrott, and I live in Eugene. My son has been incarcerated at OSP for the last four years, after spending two years at a facility in Eastern Oregon. With him at OSP, I can visit about once a month, but when he was in Eastern Oregon, those visits were much less frequent. Due to the distance, phone calls are our primary means of staying in touch. We talk almost every day.

Phone calls have been very, very important for our relationship. We both feel better emotionally and mentally when we talk to each other. I worry when I don't hear from him, and when he doesn't hear from me, he feels isolated. I listen to him share about his life, trying to help keep him grounded and help him navigate difficult situations, whether they involve other people he's interacting with or personal challenges. I also update him on how the rest of the family is doing. My son's son just turned 21, and during this critical time in his son's life, my son wants to be as present and aware as possible.

I spend around \$75 to \$80 per month on phone calls with my son. I also try to put extra funds into his commissary account, which he can use to call other friends and family members who can't afford to call him. While I'm grateful to be able to afford phone calls, the cost has impacted his other relationships, particularly with his sisters and his son. Currently, he can only call them two to three times per month because they can't afford to talk more often. I know that a lot of families can't even afford that.

It would be a huge help if phone calls were made free. He would be able to speak with other members of his family, his son, and his friends much more often. If I didn't have to spend \$75 to \$80 per month on phone calls, I could deposit more of that into his commissary so he could buy necessary items. I think it's a terrible situation when a person cannot afford to talk to their loved ones. No matter who a person is, they need to be able to communicate with their family and friends, and money should never be the determining factor when it comes to that.

Sincerely,

Ruth Perrott
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