

Dear Oregon legislators,

My name is Deann McMullins and my husband is incarcerated at Two Rivers. He has been incarcerated for roughly the last ten years. I live in Milwaukie, Oregon, and am able to visit him about once per month. We have used the phones to stay connected the entire time he has been incarcerated. We speak on the phone one or two times per day.

My husband and I just celebrated our 35th wedding anniversary, and we share four kids, one of whom still lives at home with me. Our daily phone calls have been vital for maintaining our relationship. If my husband couldn't stay connected with me and his children, I believe it would be difficult for him to avoid simply giving up. Our phone calls greatly help both of us. When he is down, I do my best to uplift him, and when I am down, he does the same for me. We have been able to comfort each other and grieve with each other throughout several deaths in the family, including that of his mother. My husband and I depend daily on each other's love and encouragement.

Our phone calls cost me \$40 to \$50 per month. Being the breadwinner and trying to raise our kids when they were young, while also trying to set aside money for phone calls and visits, was always really hard, and it still is. Setting aside funds to stay in touch with my husband often meant choosing not to do as much for our kids as I would have liked to. I remember choosing to take them to the public park instead of the zoo in order to save money for phone calls and visits. Today, when finances are tight, my husband and I are forced to rush through our conversations, sharing just a few words and leaving the rest for when I have more money. If phone calls were free, we would be able to talk more, and with less impact on my already stressful financial situation.

My husband tells me that a lot of guys at Two Rivers can't afford to call their loved ones, or can only afford to call once every few weeks. It's hard to live without contact from family and friends. It makes life more lonely inside, and it makes those of us on the outside more worried about how our loved ones are doing. Free phone calls would help families maintain more contact, especially families without much money.

Sincerely,

Deann McMullins
Milwaukie, OR