

Dear Oregon legislators,

My name is April Mota and my boyfriend is incarcerated in Salem. I live in Tualatin, which is about 45 minutes away, but because of my work schedule, I'm only able to visit him on weekends. We therefore rely on the phone to stay in touch throughout the week. He calls me once or twice a day to talk about everything from how our days are going, to updates on family, to hopes and plans for the future.

These calls are so important to us. Before we started dating a year and a half ago, we already shared a close bond as we grew up together and were middle school sweethearts. It gives both of us peace of mind to know that the other is doing okay. I've been able to tell him about things like work promotions, the agenda for the day, newly released music from our favorite artists, new restaurants to try, or even just the small successes in life, such as when I'm able to buy something I've wanted for a long time. These small details make him happy and help him stay grounded. Our ability to be connected every day has strengthened our relationship.

The cost of phone calls is very expensive. I pay around \$100 per month. For me, that is not a small burden. Making phone calls free would alleviate a lot of pressure for us as well as so many other families. The ability to talk with loved ones benefits a person's emotional wellbeing. Without that ability, it is easy to feel isolated and disconnected. Free phone calls would make it easier for my boyfriend and other inmates to stay connected to their loved ones, engage with society, and reintegrate once they are released.

Sincerely,

April Mota  
Tualatin, OR