



AN ACT PROTECTING PREPAID TELEPHONE ACCOUNTS USED BY INMATES IN STATE PRISONS FROM EXPIRATION; REQUIRING CONDITIONS OF USE AND DISCLOSURE; PROVIDING RULEMAKING; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

**Section 1. Telephone account requirements for state prisons -- protected accounts -- disclosure required -- rulemaking -- definitions.** (1) A state prison that contracts with a telecommunications service provider to provide telecommunications services for inmates shall, to the extent feasible, contract with a telecommunications service provider to provide communications services for inmates that:

- (a) provides public safety precautions required by the department of corrections;
- (b) prohibits expiration of prepaid minutes or charges;
- (c) does not charge additional usage or dormancy fees;
- (d) does not charge excessive intrastate fees that are greater than 10 cents a minute;
- (e) does not require monthly usage fees; and
- (f) allows rollover of unused, prepaid minutes into the next month unless the inmate for whom the account was set up is no longer able to use the telephone account, whether for disciplinary reasons or other reasons specified by department rule. No refund is required for unexpired minutes subject to this subsection (1)(f).

(2) Every contract entered into by a state prison for communications services under subsection (1) must require the telecommunications service provider to notify the purchaser of a prepaid telephone account of any fees or refunds that are available for unused minutes on a prepaid telephone card and mail the refund to the purchaser's address of record.

(3) The department of corrections has rulemaking authority to implement this section and shall notify the public service commission of the allowable rate that a telecommunications service provider may charge for intrastate calls under contract with the department of corrections.

(4) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Prepaid telephone account" means a system, whether purchased as a calling card or set up as an account with a telecommunications service provider to provide telephonic connections in which the purchaser pays for minutes prior to use. The term does not include a lifeline account, defined under 47 CFR 54.401, for which a telecommunications carrier receives universal service support.

(b) "State prison" has the meaning provided in 53-30-101(3)(c)(i) through (3)(c)(iii) and (3)(c)(v).

(c) "Telecommunications service provider" has the meaning provided for "operator service provider" in 69-3-1102.

**Section 2. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an integral part of Title 53, chapter 30, part 1, and the provisions of Title 53, chapter 30, part 1, apply to [section 1].

**Section 3. Severability.** If a part of [this act] is invalid, all valid parts that are severable from the invalid part remain in effect. If a part of [this act] is invalid in one or more of its applications, the part remains in effect in all valid applications that are severable from the invalid applications.

**Section 4. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2017.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,  
HB 0426, originated in the House.

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Speaker of the House

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

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Chief Clerk of the House

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President of the Senate

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

HOUSE BILL NO. 426  
INTRODUCED BY J. PRICE

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