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*** BILL NO. ***

INTRODUCED BY ***

SB303-1

BY REQUEST OF THE ***

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REVISING LAWS RELATED TO STATE PRISONS AND COUNTY DETENTION CENTER TELECOMMUNICATION CONTRACTS"; AMENDING SECTION 53-30-153, MCA; SUPERSEDING THE UNFUNDED MANDATE LAWS; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND AN APPLICABILITY DATE."

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

NEW SECTION. Section 1. Detention center telecommunication contracts - definition. (1)

County detention centers that contracts with a telecommunication service provider for inmates' telecommunications may join any telecommunication contract, at the same per minute fee, as the department of corrections. A detention center may not enter a separate telecommunication contract unless the per minute fee does not exceed 10 cents per minute.

(2) Each week an inmate must receive one free phone call, not to exceed 10 minutes, and one free video call, not to exceed 25 minutes.

(3) An inmate telecommunication contract may not include ancillary service fees including pre-paid phone cards, collect calls, and single pay calls that total more than 3% of the base charge.

(4) "Telecommunication service provided" has the meaning provided for "operator service provided" in 69-3-1102"

Section 2. Section 53-30-153, MCA, is amended to read:

"53-30-153. 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:

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Drafter: Travis Brown, 406 444-3078

67th Legislature

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- 1 (a) provides public safety precautions required by the department of corrections;
- 2 (b) prohibits expiration of prepaid minutes or charges;
- 3 (c) does not charge additional usage or dormancy fees;
- 4 (d) does not charge excessive intrastate fees that are greater than 10 cents a minute;
- 5 ~~(e) does not require monthly usage fees; and~~
- 6 (e) does not include ancillary service fees, including for pre-paid phone cards, collect calls, and single
- 7 pay calls that total more than 3% of the base charge; and

8 (f) allows rollover of unused, prepaid minutes into the next month unless the inmate for whom the
9 account was set up is no longer able to use the telephone account, whether for disciplinary reasons or other
10 reasons specified by department rule. No refund is required for unexpired minutes subject to this subsection
11 (1)(f).

12
13 (2) Every contract entered into by a state prison for communications services under subsection (1)
14 must require the telecommunications service provider to notify the purchaser of a prepaid telephone account of
15 any fees or refunds that are available for unused minutes on a prepaid telephone card and mail the refund to
16 the purchaser's address of record.

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

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

21 (a) "Prepaid telephone account" means a system, whether purchased as a calling card or set up as
22 an account with a telecommunications service provider, to provide telephonic connections in which the
23 purchaser pays for minutes prior to use. The term does not include a lifeline account, defined under 47 CFR
24 54.401, for which a telecommunications carrier receives universal service support.

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

26 (c) "Telecommunications service provider" has the meaning provided for "operator service provider" in
27 69-3-1102."

28 NEW SECTION. Section 3. {standard} Unfunded mandate laws superseded. The provisions of

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1 [this act] expressly supersede and modify the requirements of 1-2-112 through 1-2-116.

2 NEW SECTION. **Section 4. Transition.** The department of corrections shall include an option for a
3 county detention center to opt-in to a telecommunication contract at the same per-minute rate offered to the
4 department of corrections.

5 NEW SECTION. **Section 5. Codification instruction.** [Sections 1] is intended to be codified as an
6 integral part of Title 7, chapter 32, part 22, and the provisions of Title 7, chapter 32, part 22, apply to [sections
7 1].

8 NEW SECTION. **Section 6. {standard} Saving clause.** [This act] does not affect rights and duties
9 that matured, penalties that were incurred, or proceedings that were begun before [the effective date of this
10 act].

11 NEW SECTION. **Section 7. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2023.

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13 NEW SECTION. **Section 8. Applicability.** [This act] applies to telecommunication contracts signed
14 or renewed by the department of corrections and county detention centers on or after April 30, 2024.

15 - END -