
OLR Bill Analysis

SB 972

AN ACT CONCERNING THE COST OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.

SUMMARY

This bill requires, starting October 1, 2022, the Department of Correction (DOC) to provide telephone services for inmates in correctional facilities and allows the commissioner to supplement phone services with other telecommunications services, including video communication and email. Any communication service the commissioner provides must be free of charge to the inmates and to the people who initiate or receive the communication.

The bill prohibits (1) the DOC commissioner from supplanting in-person contact visits inmates are eligible to receive with phone or other communication services and (2) DOC from receiving revenue for phone or telecommunications service to inmates on and after October 1, 2022.

The bill also repeals the laws requiring the Department of Administrative Services to transfer some of the revenue derived from inmate phone calls to:

1. the judicial department for probation transition program and technical violation unit staff and services and
2. DOC to expand inmate educational services and re-entry initiatives.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the repealer section is effective on October 1, 2022.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 24 Nay 13 (03/29/2021)