

Eliminate the Prison Phone Call Surcharge:

Maintaining family ties during incarceration increases the likelihood of successful family reunification post-release; given the inaccessibility to public transportation of most New Jersey prisons, phone calls to loved ones are the preferred method for ensuring these family connections, and all of these calls are collect. Under a Department of Treasury contract with Global Tel*Link, a substantial surcharge is imposed on all collect calls placed by incarcerated individuals. In fact, New Jersey has the third-highest from-prison call rates in the nation. These high surcharges, which go into New Jersey's general fund, function as a tax on the families of incarcerated individuals, most of whom are already under substantial economic strain, further fraying the family connections. The state can address the unfairness of exploiting prisoners' call recipients for revenue by eliminating phone surcharges, as New York State did earlier this year.