**Sample Letter to Congress regarding FCC Order**

**(Printed on Sheriff’s Office Letterhead)**

February XX, 2014

The Honorable John Doe

Address

Washington, DC 20510 (Senate) or 20515 (House)

Dear Senator/Congressman/Congresswoman Doe:

I am writing to inform you about an *Order* issued by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that will adversely impact my office and the performance of my duties as Sheriff of \_\_\_ County, and to seek your help in correcting this situation. Specifically, in the FCC’s *Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* on *Rates for Interstate Inmate Calling Services* (ICS)(WC Docket No. 12-375), issued on September 26, 2013, the FCC has reduced the rates that can be charged for interstate inmate calling services in both prisons and jails by establishing arbitrary rules that fail to take into account the unique challenges inherent in providing telephone privileges to jail inmates.

This FCC *Order*, due to take effect February 11, 2014, establishes interstate inmate calling service (ICS) rate caps that disregard the costs incurred by jails in providing inmate calling services. Inmate telephone systems are built to reflect the unique needs of each correctional facility and provide a variety of important security components. These security components come at a cost to the facility. Moreover, the small size of most jails, coupled with high turnover rates, means that jails must charge more per minute than larger prison facilities in order to recover the costs of providing ICS. The *Order* disregards these realities! It imposes unrealistically low rate caps that limit the ability of ICS providers to recover costs of administering services in smaller, higher cost facilities. As a result of the FCC’s “one-size-fits-all” approach to ICS, many jails may be forced to severely limit or altogether eliminate inmate telephone privileges.

On December 13, 2013, the National Sheriffs’ Association (NSA) filed a petition at the FCC requesting that it reconsider the effective date of this *Order* as it applies to Sheriffs operating jails. Specifically, NSA asked the Commission “to delay the effective date for Sheriffs operating jails until after a further rulemaking quantifying the administrative and security costs associated with the provision of ICS in jails or, in the alternative, no sooner than February 11, 2015,” to allow Sheriffs to modify their budgets or consider other alternatives that would allow them to continue to provide interstate ICS services and maintain necessary security functions.

For the reasons outlined above, I urgently ask that you contact the office of FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler (202-418-1000; Tom.Wheeler@fcc.gov) before February 11 to express your support for NSA’s petition.

Sincerely,

Sheriff \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

cc: Congressman Greg Walden, Chairman, 2182 RHOB, Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Bob Latta, Vice Chairman, 2448 RHOB, Washington, DC 20515

Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, Ranking Member, 241 CHOB, Washington, DC 20515

Energy and Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology