

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2025

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1953

By: Representative Torres

By: Senator D. Wallace

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR A SURCHARGE TO BE ASSESSED ON INMATE PHONE CALLS TO OFFSET THE COSTS OF SECURITY NEEDS ASSOCIATED WITH INMATE COMMUNICATIONS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO PROVIDE FOR A SURCHARGE TO BE ASSESSED ON INMATE PHONE CALLS TO OFFSET THE COSTS OF SECURITY NEEDS ASSOCIATED WITH INMATE COMMUNICATIONS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative findings and intent.

(a) The General Assembly finds that the Secretary of the Department of Corrections may add a surcharge to all inmate calls to offset the cost of equipment and operations for security needs associated with inmate communications.

(b) The General Assembly intends:

(1) The department to assess a surcharge on inmate calls to be used to pay for certain expenses to offset the cost of security needs associated with inmate communications; and

(2) To authorize a county sheriff in charge of a county jail to assess a surcharge on inmate calls to offset the cost of security needs associated with inmate communications.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 12-27-128, concerning the Division of



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Correction Nontax Revenue Receipts Fund, is amended to add an additional subsection to read as follows:

(d)(1) Moneys collected under § 12-29-119 shall be used only to offset the cost of security needs associated with inmate communications.

(2) The Board of Corrections shall set guidelines for the authorized uses of the moneys described in subdivision (d)(1) of this section.

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 12-29-119 is amended to read as follows:
12-29-119. Inmate telephone calls.

(a) For an inmate making an intrastate telephone call from a Division of Correction facility or Division of Community Correction facility:

(1) The cost per minute shall not be more than the maximum cost per minute of an interstate inmate telephone call as determined by the Federal Communications Commission as of January 1, 2021; and

(2) Ancillary service charges shall not be permitted except an ancillary service charge of a type and up to an amount authorized by the Federal Communications Commission for an interstate inmate telephone call as of January 1, 2021.

(b)(1)(A) The Department of Corrections shall assess a surcharge on each inmate telephone and video call to offset the cost of security needs associated with inmate communications.

(B) The surcharge shall be added to the cost per telephone and video call, collected by the vendor providing inmate communication services, and deposited into the Division of Correction Nontax Revenue Receipts Fund monthly.

(2) The amount of the surcharge shall be determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State after consultation with Arkansas Legislative Audit and the Division of Correction and upon approval by the Governor.

SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 12-41-105, concerning commissions from inmate telephone services and profits from inmate commissary services, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as follows:

(e)(1)(A) A county sheriff may assess a surcharge in an amount described in subdivision (e)(2) of this section on each inmate telephone and video call to offset the cost of security needs associated with inmate

communications.

(B) If assessed, the surcharge shall be added to the cost per telephone and video call, collected by the vendor providing inmate communication services, and credited to the county sheriff's office communications facility and equipment fund monthly.

(2) The amount of the surcharge shall be determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the state, after consultation with Arkansas Legislative Audit and the Association of Arkansas Counties and upon approval by the Governor.