

2018 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 133

BY REPRESENTATIVE SMITH

CORR FACILITIES/JAILS: Requests the Department of Public Safety and Corrections and the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association to ensure that video phones are available in all state and parish facilities

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Department of Public Safety and Corrections and the Louisiana
3 Sheriffs' Association to ensure that video phones are available in all state and parish
4 facilities.

5 WHEREAS, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 addresses the needs
6 of people with disabilities and prohibits discrimination in employment, public services, and
7 public accommodations; and

8 WHEREAS, Title IV of the ADA of 1990 mandated a nationwide system of
9 telecommunications relay services to make the telephone network accessible to people who
10 are deaf and hard of hearing; and

11 WHEREAS, according to United States Bureau of Justice statistics, in 2012, more
12 than six percent of state and federal inmates reported having a hearing disability; and

13 WHEREAS, inmates with disabilities are at risk for mistreatment by guards and other
14 correctional employees; and

15 WHEREAS, the ability to call home is important for every inmate, but it is especially
16 important for deaf and hard of hearing inmates because they are often surrounded by people
17 who do not know American Sign Language; and

18 WHEREAS, video phones are devices that assist deaf and hard of hearing people in
19 communicating with each other over the phone, or with other people through a sign language
20 interpreter; and

1 WHEREAS, the technology provided to deaf and hard of hearing people in most U.S.
2 prisons is a teletypewriter, a machine developed in the 1960s that requires users to type
3 messages; however, this technology is outdated and many deaf and hard of hearing inmates
4 are unable to communicate with family members and loved ones; and

5 WHEREAS, inmates who are able to keep in touch with their families and loved ones
6 are less likely to commit more crimes; and

7 WHEREAS, video phones in all state and parish facilities would ensure deaf and
8 hard of hearing inmates are not isolated from communicating with others.

9 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
10 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Public Safety and
11 Corrections and the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association to ensure that video phones are available
12 in state and parish facilities for deaf and hard of hearing inmates.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that suitable copies of this Resolution be transmitted
14 to the Department of Public Safety and Corrections and the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HR 133 Original

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Smith

Requests the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections and the La. Sheriffs' Association to ensure that video phones are available in all state and parish facilities for deaf and hard of hearing inmates.