

1 State of Arkansas  
2 95th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2025  
4

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1953

5 By: Representative Torres  
6 By: Senator D. Wallace  
7

## For An Act To Be Entitled

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

15 TO PROVIDE FOR A SURCHARGE TO BE  
16 ASSESSED ON INMATE PHONE CALLS TO OFFSET  
17 THE COSTS OF SECURITY NEEDS ASSOCIATED  
18 WITH INMATE COMMUNICATIONS.  
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21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
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23 SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative findings and intent.

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

28 (b) The General Assembly intends:

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

32 (2) To authorize a county sheriff in charge of a county jail to  
33 assess a surcharge on inmate calls to offset the cost of security needs  
34 associated with inmate communications.  
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36 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 12-27-128, concerning the Division of



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

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

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

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9 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 12-29-119 is amended to read as follows:  
10 12-29-119. Inmate telephone calls.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 communications.

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

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

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