

Phil Candelmo
Gorham, ME - Courage House

My name is Phil Candelmo. I'm a resident of the Courage House in Gorham. I got out of the Cumberland County Jail back in November after fifteen months inside.

It wasn't my first bid, but it was really hard for me because for a lot of the time I was in there, my brother was dying of cancer, and I could barely talk to him. For months, I had to rely on my dying brother's wife to put money that she barely had onto my books, just so I could talk to him. And I still had to limit when I could talk to him. God, I would have loved to talk to my brother every day at the end of his life. Even three to four times a week. But it adds up fast, and we couldn't afford it. When I could reach him, if he wasn't up to talking, we'd still be charged \$2 for the connection. It might not sound like much, but it adds up fast when your family doesn't have much money and is drowning in medical bills.

I also would have loved to talk to my other relatives, including my ten year old daughter. Being inside takes so much away from those relationships. Not being able to talk on the phone with the people you love makes it that much worse. But, oh my God, one phone call from my daughter can make my whole week. You're so shut off in there. Nobody wants to sit in jail, but calls and letters can make the difference between things being okay and life being torture.

Please vote to support LD 1175 and help us lower the cost of these calls.

Thank you.