

For many years our Friends, family, and loved ones could purchase items from credited vendors and have them sent to us.

Items such as writing paper, Notebooks, journals, Stationary, box cards, envelopes, etc. We could even purchase them by direct order with a payment from our Trust Fund Account.

T.I TDCS decided it wanted to curb what inmates could get and from whom.

Now, we must buy paper, cards, envelopes, etc, from the unit Commissary. TDCS made products from TDCS ran Printshops.

Our family can no longer send what we need because we have to spend all our money (and theirs) on TDCS items. Problem is this...

The unit Commissary does not always have the needed or wanted items in stock! We must purchase the limited items they have.

Not everyone can afford a notebook of 50 pages for 3-4 dollars. 50 sheets of stationary for 4-5 dollars.

Not everyone wants to buy the same card for birthdays, holidays, or simple Thinking of you cards. The designs are very limited and repetitive. Also biased.

Biased how? Not everyone who's able to purchase cards is represented belief wise. Holiday cards are Christian in format. Yet we are a mixed belief system. There's no holiday cards for other religions. For instance, I'm Pagan/Wiccan. I have many Sabbaths yet I cannot purchase any card here to reflect my beliefs. Yet I cannot even go through an outside vendor that specializes in my religion. Neither can my family order and pre-pay for them.

So where does that leave us? Can't purchase what we want, yet we have no alternative, either.

For those (also like me) who receive limited funds? We are "screwed" as well. 1) TDCs will take half of our money for medical co-pay, if we owe medical. 2) If we get indigent supplies, that money is taken also up to half or all of our allotted funds. 3) If court costs are to be paid, well that gets paid first also.

So heres the break down, you get a hundred for your birthday or holiday. You owe medical ^{\$75⁰⁰} so half of that up to ^{\$50} gets taken out. Maybe you're left with

half. You owe indigent... Say \$10... That gets taken. You are left with approx. \$40 of the amount sent. IF court fees, etc, are not owed.

Of that left over amount, you might want to get phone minutes, stamps, writing material, hygiene, clothing, etc. That's not a lot, trust me forty does not go a-long ways like it used to!

As I've said before TDCJ is a money making machine. Yet what I cannot figure out is why the system still can't pay their officers, keep us housed properly, feed us, or anything else.

⊙ Except ~~constant~~ constant budget cuts all over TDCJ. That affects everybody! Inmates, TDC employees, the state, society as a whole.

And yet TDCJ is allowed to commit felonies on a daily basis. Like cornering the market on what we are allowed to purchase. If cornering the market for personal gain is a federal offense then why is a state run institution allowed to flaunt federal statutes? Is there any help or hope for us as a whole?