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Hudson County Correctional & Rehabilitation Center

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## Exorbitant Rates - Prison Profiteers

On November 2, 2020 Hudson County Corr. Ctr. chose in its discretion to raise the prices of items on commissary by an undisclosed percentage. Prior to this prices were already exorbitant.

Recently in San Francisco, the sheriff took it upon himself to help regulate the outrageous and unfair prices of commissary items and video and telephone calls. This came in response to county jails charging disproportionate rate in comparison with other county jails.

One county jail located about 143 miles away from San Francisco, charged up to 43% higher rates despite using the same vendor. (PIN)

This among other examples sparked the sheriff's decision to change the policy.

Currently Hudson County charges outrageous prices along with a regressive sales tax at a rate of 10%. Even though sales tax in the state of NJ is only 7%; 3½% in Urban Enterprise Zones; 0% on clothing.

The inmate population is one of the most vulnerable populations in the state, for the jail to be overcharging us like this is just taking advantage of a vulnerable group.

There is no way for an inmate to calculate exactly how disproportionately the sales are in comparison with other local county jails. However based on inmates' experience being here, Essex County, Bergen Co, Morris, Passaic, it seems there is a large percentage disparity like it was in San Francisco before the new policy change. Currently in California pending in the legislature is SB555 which would "regulate this market", putting a cap on profits etc.

It is time for The State of New Jersey to do the same and introduce legislation to protect inmates from predatory prison profiteers.