

The No-Frills Prison Act of 2001

Dear Colleague:

While some of our children go to school in overcrowded, portable trailers without computers, criminals incarcerated in our federal prisons enjoy luxurious facilities complete with cable television. Taxpayers pay for this cable T.V. service.

In addition, premium movie channels (ie, HBO, Showtime, Cinemax,) video rentals, and other perks are also available in federal prisons. They are paid for out of prison commissary funds. Last year this amounted to approximately \$180 million dollars. Federal spending priorities must be rearranged. We cannot continue to spend \$1 dollar on school children for every \$5 dollars we spend on federal prisoners.

On Tuesday, February 6th, I introduced H.R. 458, The **No Frills Prison Act of 2001**, to eliminate taxpayer funding of cable television from federal prisons. H.R. 458 ensures that money from the US treasury shall not be used, “to purchase cable television services, to rent or purchase videocassettes, videocassette recorders, or other audiovisual or electronic equipment used primarily for recreational purposes”.

Eight states have already eliminated cable television in state prisons. The federal government must follow their lead. In Florida, where cable television is now banned, the Florida House voted 114 to 2 and the Senate voted unanimously to pass this law. This is truly a bipartisan measure that helps set our spending priorities straight.

Federal prisoners need not be coddled with frivolous luxuries at the expense of the American taxpayer. The **No Frills Prison Act of 2001** ends this offensive waste of public funds. Please join me in supporting this important measure by signing on as an original co-sponsor. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Grayson Wolfe in my office at 52176.

Sincerely,

Ric Keller
MEMBER OF CONGRESS