

Cortez, Paul V. *Prison Profit-Tears*, Green Haven Correctional Facility, NY

AVENTIV TECHNOLOGIES

Fall 2021



DISCLAIMER

This presentation was prepared by Worth Rises on behalf of the countless incarcerated people and families who are negatively impacted by the predatory business practices of Aventiv Technologies (hereafter “Aventiv”) and its subsidiaries, Securus Technologies (hereafter “Securus”) and JPay.

This presentation intends to highlight the considerable ethical, financial, and reputational concerns presented by and investment in Aventiv and its subsidiaries. Nothing in this presentation should be considered investment advice. This presentation is for informational purposes only.





Contact:

Bianca Tylek

Executive Director

btylek@worthrises.org

Worth Rises is a non-profit advocacy organization ending the exploitation of incarcerated people and their loved ones. We advocate to protect and return the economic resources extracted from communities impacted by incarceration.

Worth Rises is a national leader in the prison phone justice movement. We have led successful campaigns to make prison and jail communication services free for incarcerated people and their loved ones in Connecticut, New York City, San Francisco, Louisville, and other jurisdictions, saving families more than \$50 million annually. We have also blocked roll-on acquisitions, advocated for increased regulation, persuaded investor divestment, sparked class action litigation, and demanded the personal accountability of executives in the prison telecom industry. Importantly, we also spent roughly nine months in extensive talks with Platinum Equity and Aventiv about their predatory corporate practices.

AGENDA

Transaction

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Financial Risks

**Appendix:
Transformation
Claims**



CORPORATE PROFILE

Corporation: Aventiv Technologies

Subsidiaries: Securus, JPay, GovPay

Chief Executive Officer: Dave Abel

Owner: Platinum Equity

Investment Date: November 2017

HISTORY OF LIES AT ACQUISITION

In 2017, Securus was fined \$1.7 million by the FCC for providing “inaccurate and misleading information” related to its acquisition by Platinum Equity.¹

Aventiv is the largest correctional telecom vendor in the nation. Platinum Equity created the holding company in October 2019 to distance itself from the notorious history of the company’s main holdings: Securus and JPay. The company’s predatory business practices range from egregious price gouging to routine constitutional violations. In January 2020, Platinum Equity named Dave Abel Chief Executive Officer of the new company and announced a transformation agenda. Unfortunately, to date, these predatory business practices persist. The company has prioritized improving its press coverage over improving its business model.

1. “Securus Agrees to Pay \$1.7 Million Civil Penalty.” Federal Communications Commission. Enforcement Bureau, October 6, 2018. <https://www.fcc.gov/document/securus-agrees-pay-17-million-civil-penalty>.



A BAD PLAYER IN A DARK INDUSTRY

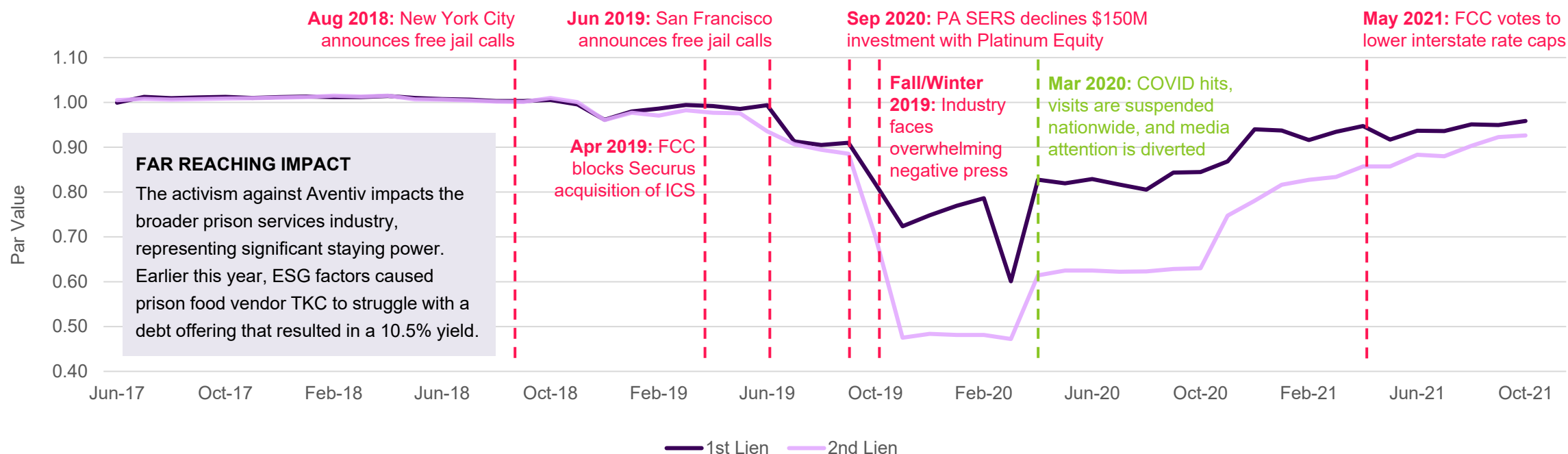
- Correctional telecom is an expanding **\$1.4 billion industry**, which funnels hundreds of millions of dollars from the pockets of struggling families – who are disproportionately Black and brown and low-income – into police and prison coffers every year. **One in three families** with an incarcerated loved one goes into debt trying to stay in touch,¹ though maintaining community ties is critical to successful reentry, lowering recidivism, and improving public safety.
- Securus charges families as much as **a dollar per minute** to communicate with their incarcerated loved ones. JPay charges families with incarcerated loved ones to send *and* receive an *email* – free in the outside world – and **egregious rates** for entertainment and even simple money transfers, among other products and services.
- Securus and JPay are routinely **fined by regulators** and **sued by litigators** for abusive and illegal corporate practices, and their growing suite of **invasive surveillance technology** is drawing increasing scrutiny.

1. Saneta DeVuono-Powell, Chris Schweidler, Alicia Walters, and Azadeh Zohrabi. *Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families*. Oakland, CA: Ella Baker Center, Forward Together, Research Action Design, 2015.

VOLATILE DEBT PERFORMANCE

Platinum Equity acquired Securus in November 2017 for \$1.6 billion with \$1.0 billion in 1st lien debt and \$283 million in 2nd lien debt. Its debt performance has been negatively impacted by activism and only recently rebounded due to COVID.

Platinum Equity is hoping to sell now to capitalize on this short-term rebound and avoid long term losses.



COVID GAINS ARE SHORT-TERM

- Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Aventiv's revenue was flat year-over-year, and its debt was plummeting after months of pivotal wins by prison phone justice advocates and bad headlines. The pandemic offered the Aventiv the gift it needed to recover: the termination of visits, the interruption of advocacy, and distracted media.
- The artificial boost that Aventiv is enjoying in this moment is not sustainable in a post-pandemic society as visits are reintroduced, advocacy routes reopen, and media turns its attention back to the predatory industry.

HISTORY: ELIMINATION OF VISITS

In 2015, Securus and other prison telecoms were looking to expand their video calling services. To guarantee use after costly installations, they would contractually require agencies to end or restrict visits. Agencies obliged in exchange for commission revenue. The practice created public outrage and was soon terminated. However, by then, many agencies had already terminated visits. While Platinum Equity speaks out against this practice, Aventiv continues to profit from this historical practice in facilities that did not reintroduce visits.



TRANSFORMATION CLAIMS ARE FALSE

Platinum Equity is claiming to have reformed Aventiv and billing itself and the company as change agents in this predatory industry. Nothing could be further from the truth.

- **They didn't want to reform the company, they wanted to expand it:** Before trying to reform the company, the first thing Securus did under Platinum Equity's ownership was to try to acquire the third largest player in the market. The acquisition fell through when the FCC blocked the deal after petitioning by advocates.
- **They assign blame to others:** Platinum Equity and Aventiv routinely blame correctional agencies who demand commissions for the high rates of calls. However, the scheme was created by Securus and others in the field that continue to exploit it to win contracts. The claim also overlooks the gross amount that the company still takes home.
- **Their limited corporate reforms are far too little, far too late:** Despite being fully through its typical investment cycle, Platinum Equity did not change *any* predatory practices at Aventiv until it came under significant pressure in just the last year. The minor changes that have been made are superficial and far from the relief families need.
- **Less evil is still evil:** There is no reforming an industry built around the exploitation of incarcerated people and their families, who are disproportionately Black, brown, and low-income.

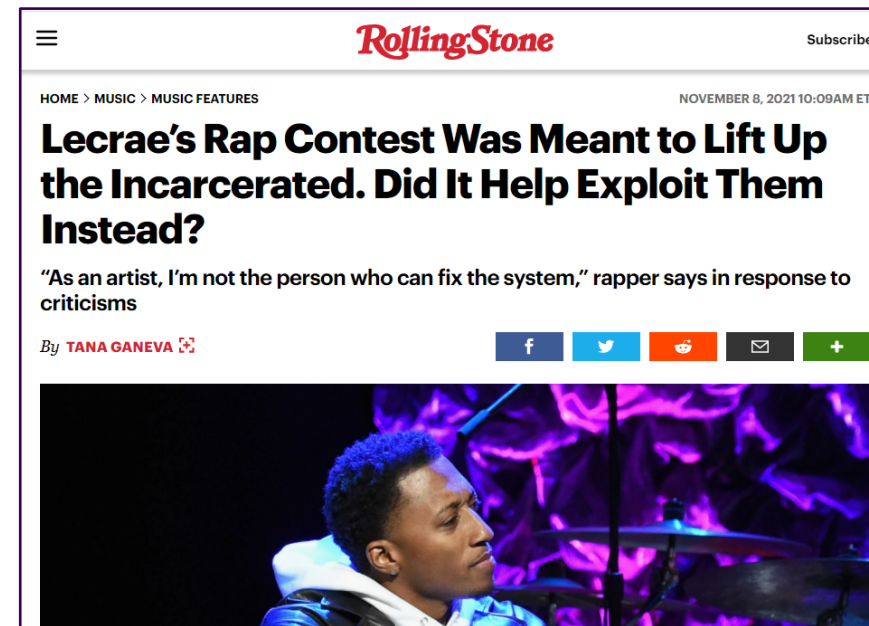


CORPORATE STUNTS

Platinum Equity and Aventiv are not interested in transforming their business model. Various advocates, most prominently those from Worth Rises and Color of Change, have engaged with executives from the firm and company since March 2019 with little to no change.

Instead, Platinum Equity and Aventiv have focused on public relations gimmicks to clean up the brand image:

- Hired Yusef Jackson, the fourth son of civil rights leader Jesse Jackson, as an advisor, whose glorifying op-eds have included blatant lies about the company's position on active legislation
- Hosted a hip hop contest and was forced to delay its winner announcement due to negative press
- Launched grant program for reentry organizations, despite being a major hindrance to the successful reentry of thousands every year, to launder extracted wealth as charitable gifts



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THE IMPACT ON FAMILIES

- **1 in 3** families with an incarcerated loved one goes into debt to cover the cost of staying connected,¹ and they often forego necessities like electricity, rent, and groceries to be able to afford prison or jail communication.
- **87%** of the family members carrying the burden of these costs are women, largely women of color.²
- **1 in 29** children have a parent incarcerated, and communication strains with their parent worsen the trauma and isolation they suffer.³

1. Saneta DeVuono-Powell, Chris Schweidler, Alicia Walters, and Azadeh Zohrabi. *Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families*. Oakland, CA: Ella Baker Center, Forward Together, Research Action Design, 2015.

2. Saneta DeVuono-Powell, Chris Schweidler, Alicia Walters, and Azadeh Zohrabi. *Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families*. Oakland, CA: Ella Baker Center, Forward Together, Research Action Design, 2015.

3. Harvey, Sylvia. "2.7 Million Kids Have Parents in Prison. They're Losing Their Right to Visit." *The Nation*, 2 December 2015, <https://www.thenation.com/article/2-7m-kids-have-parents-in-prison-theyre-losing-their-right-to-visit/>.



Diane with her son Jovaan, who served 14 years

"Thousands of Connecticut families like mine are 'figuring it out' every day. We are figuring out which bills to pay, which nights we skip dinner, and which doctors' visits to cancel so that we can afford to speak to our children, our siblings, our parents."



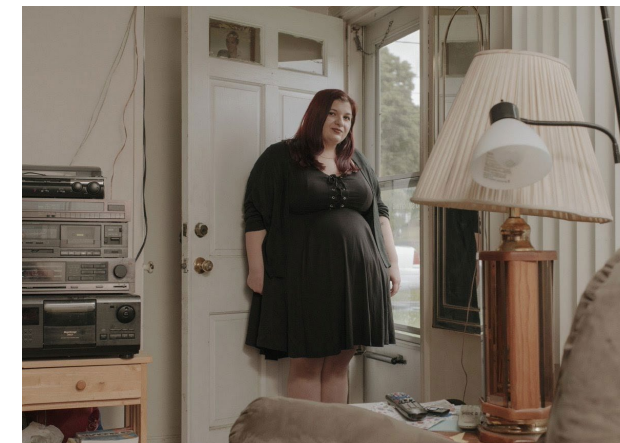
THE SOCIETAL COST

Every study ever done on communication in prisons and jails has shown only a positive impact.¹ No program has shown to be more effective at improving reentry outcomes than creating open lines of communication between people in prison or jail and their support systems. Yet, financial barriers stifle these positive impacts that communication would otherwise offer. In other words, the greed of correctional telecom vendors, like Aventiv, and their government partners is hindering reentry success, worsening recidivism, and hurting public safety.

“There’s nothing that can break the toxicity of the prison environment like hearing a child’s voice.” – Tranell

“Not being able to talk with family kept me from being able to plan for my future after prison.” – Anonymous

1. Petersilia, Joan. When Prisoners Come Home: Parole and Prisoner Reentry. Oxford University Press, 2006, p 246.



Caitlin, whose husband is incarcerated

“Without those calls I don’t know what kind of person I would be today. He gives me just as much hope as I give him.”



**THE FIRST STEP IN THE
EVOLUTION OF ETHICS IS A
SENSE OF SOLIDARITY WITH
OTHER HUMAN BEINGS**

Albert Schweitzer

AGENDA



LEGISLATIVE RISKS

Since our first win in 2018, policy campaigns for free calls have been cropping up and winning across the US.

New York City Council passes legislation to make all jail calls free in 48-3 vote, making it the first jurisdiction in the US to do so.

Jul. 2018

Jun. 2019

San Francisco mayor announces policy to make all jail calls free. County follows with legislation.

Apr. 2020

The CARES Act includes provision to make all phone and video calls free in federal prisons during the COVID pandemic.

San Diego's bipartisan Board of Supervisors unanimously passes local law to make all jail calls free.

Mar. 2021

Los Angeles Board of Supervisors passes motion to make all jail calls free in the nation's largest jail system.

May 2021

May 2021

Representative Senator Tammy Duckworth introduces S.1541 and Bobby Rush introduces H.R.6389 to expand FCC regulatory authority over all prison and jail calls and ensure just and reasonable rates.

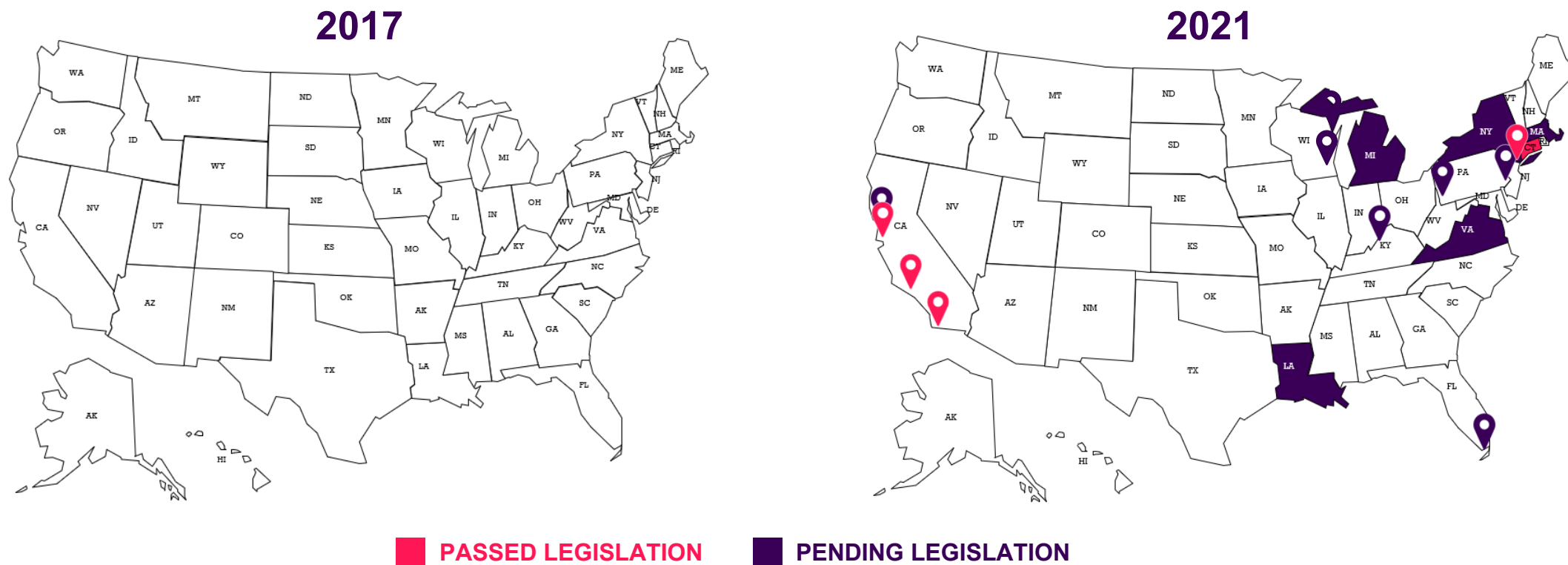
Connecticut passes legislation with strong bipartisan support to become the first state to make all prison communication free.

Jun. 2021



LEGISLATIVE RISKS (Cont.)

Today, there are active legislative campaigns for free prison and jail communication in roughly a dozen states and at the federal level. Additional states are considering making calls free through confidential policy actions.



REGULATORY RISKS: FEDERAL

The FCC and state regulators are heeding the calls of advocates to rein in the monopolistic market powers and extortionary pricing practices of the correctional telecom industry. Aventiv has suggested that it is collaborating with regulators and not deeply concerned about regulation, but the following facts would suggest otherwise.

- The FCC's **newest rate caps** for interstate calls of \$0.14 - \$0.16 per minute represent as much as a 35% reduction from prior caps and will likely keep falling. The new rate caps already threaten Aventiv's national average of \$0.13.
- Congress is considering legislation that would confirm FCC **regulatory authority over all prison and jail calls**.
- While Aventiv is expanding its unregulated business lines, traditional **calling is still the bulk of its revenue**.

The FCC has not just exercised its rulemaking powers to set rate caps, but it has also wielded its power to **block mergers and acquisitions** that present anti-trust concerns. In 2019, the FCC blocked Securus attempted add-on acquisition of Inmate Calling Solutions, siding with advocates in determining that the deal was not in the public interest.¹ Given its size and the market, it is unlikely that Aventiv will be able to do any more acquisitions in the space.

1. Shepardson, David. "Inmate Calling Services Companies Drop Merger Bid after U.S. Regulatory Opposition." Reuters, Thomson Reuters, 2 Apr. 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-fcc-inmate-merger-idUSKCN1RE2L7>.

REGULATORY RISKS: STATE

Since the courts limited the FCC’s regulatory authority over instate calls, the FCC has put pressure on states through the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners to regulate instate calls.¹ Several states heeded the guidance, and more are doing so at the FCC rates or lower.

State	Rate Cap
Alabama	\$0.21/min (prepaid), \$0.25/min (collect)
California	\$0.07/min (<i>Securus is appealing</i>)
Illinois	\$0.07/min
Louisiana	\$0.25/min (prepaid), \$0.30/min (collect)
Massachusetts	\$0.21/min (prepaid), \$0.25/min (collect)
Montana	\$0.10/min
New Jersey	\$0.11/min (domestic), \$0.25/min (international)
Ohio	\$0.21/min (instate)

BUCKING STATE REGULATION

Despite claims that it’s collaborating with regulators, Aventiv has a long history of bucking regulation, especially at the state level. For example, in Massachusetts, where state regulators set instate rate caps equal to the FCC’s interstate rate caps. Aventiv claimed it did not have to abide by the rate caps because the state regulators did not have authority over VoIP technology. For years, Securus has had the highest rates in the state. And today, through its subsidiary Securus, Aventiv is opposing interim rate caps set by the California regulators.

1. “NARUC Urges Members to Review Inmate Calling Rates.” NARUC, <https://www.naruc.org/about-naruc/press-releases/naruc-urges-members-to-review-inmate-calling-rates/>.

2. Healey, Maura. “Re: Joint Application for Grant of Authority to Transfer Ownership and Control of Inmate Calling Solutions, LLC d/h/a ICSolutions to Securus Technologies, Inc., WC Docket No. 18-193.” Received by Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary Federal Communications Commission, FCC, 23 July 2018, <https://ecfsapi.fcc.gov/file/10723098426958/Mass%20AG%20Reply%20Comments%20Securus%20ICSolutions%20Transfer%20WC%20Dkt%20No%2018-193.pdf>. Accessed 27 Oct. 2021.



LITIGATION RISKS

Aventiv, through its subsidiaries, is constantly facing and settling lawsuits brought by government agencies and private classes for a wide variety of legal violations. Below is just a sample of some of these cases.

- In 2015, a hack of Securus' servers released the recordings of more than 70 million calls to the public and revealed **57,000 recordings of privileged attorney-client calls**.¹ Securus has since faced and settled litigation in California, Kansas, Maine, Missouri, Texas, and other states for this type of constitutional rights violation for tens of millions of dollars. The most recent incident of such violations was in New York City earlier this year.
- In 2020, Securus was sued for **price-fixing calls** with its largest competitor GTL. The case is still being litigated.²
- In October, JPay was fined \$6 million by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau for **deceptive and abusive practices** related to its debit release card.³

1. Smith, Jordan, and Micah Lee. "Hack of 70 Million Prisoner Phone Calls Indicates Violations of Attorney-Client Privilege." The Intercept, 11 Nov. 2015, <https://theintercept.com/2015/11/11/securus-hack-prison-phone-company-exposes-thousands-of-calls-lawyers-and-clients/>.

2. "Families of Prisoners Sue Nation's Largest Providers of Inmate Calling Services for Fixing and Lying about Prices." Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, 29 Jun. 2020, <https://www.washlaw.org/families-of-prisoners-sue-nations-largest-providers-of-inmate-calling-services-for-fixing-and-lying-about-prices/>.

3. "CFPB Penalizes JPay for Siphoning Taxpayer-Funded Benefits Intended to Help People Re-Enter Society After Incarceration." Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, 19 Oct. 2021, <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/about-us/newsroom/cfpb-penalizes-jpay-for-siphoning-taxpayer-funded-benefits-intended-to-help-people-re-enter-society-after-incarceration/>.



REPUTATIONAL RISKS: INSTITUTIONS

Platinum Equity's investment in Aventiv has put traditional investors on their heels in responding to advocacy and activism, and many are starting to turn away.

Platinum Equity, Aventiv, Securus, and JPay are all commonly cited in negative press, including opinion editorials published by pensioners. The reputational hit for the firm has impacted investments and relationships with major investors.

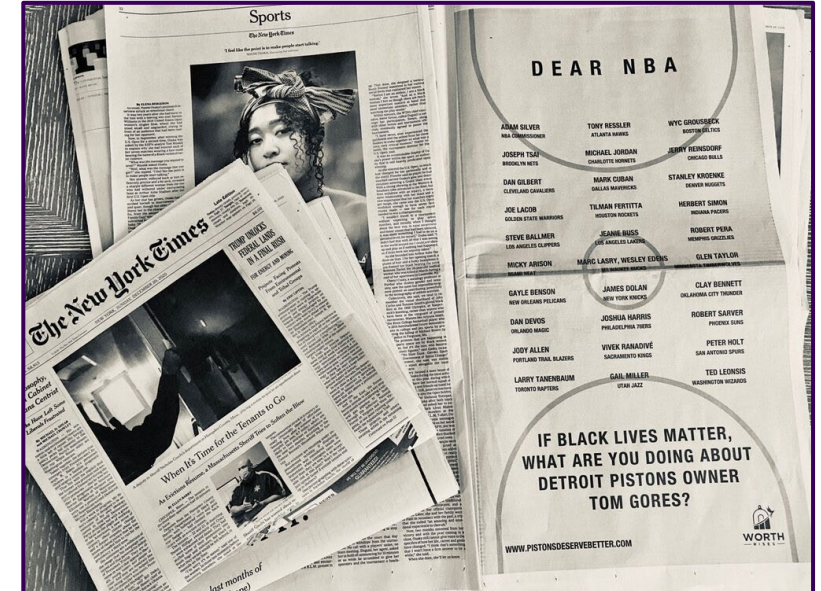
- The investment created a riff between the two largest public pensions in Pennsylvania. Eventually, the Pennsylvania State Employees' Retirement System investment committee **denied the firm a \$150 million investment** in the its flagship fund.
- After a heated debate in executive session, the New York City Retirement Systems **expanded their prison investment ban** with Platinum Equity.



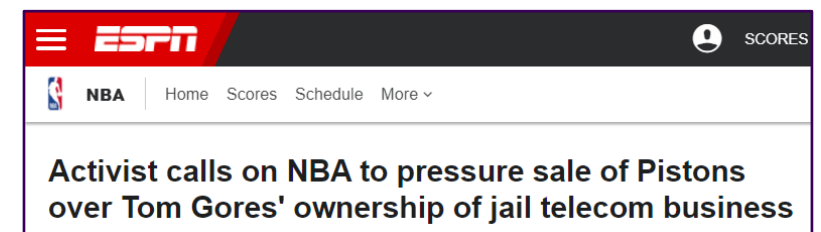
REPUTATIONAL RISKS: EXECUTIVES

Ownership of Aventiv not only poses reputational risks to institutional investors, but also to their corporate executives.

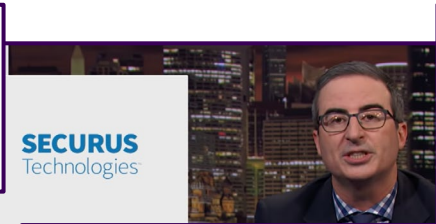
- Due to a **firestorm of negative press**, the name of Platinum Equity's CEO, Tom Gores, has become synonymous with the exploitation of incarcerated people and their families, irreparably tarnishing Gores' public image.
- Following pressure from artists and activists, Tom Gores was forced to **resign from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)** Board of Trustees due to his ownership of Aventiv.
- Advocates are also calling for the **forced sale of the NBA's Detroit Pistons** by owner Tom Gores, a campaign demand that launched with a full-page ad in the *New York Times*.



Full page ad in the New York Times



Los Angeles Times
Tom Gores resigns from LACMA board over prison phones investment



NordVPN
The Securus location tracking scandal is worse than we thought

ClassAction.org
Major Inmate Call Service Providers Hit with Antitrust Class Action Over Alleged Single-Call Price Fixing

BUSINESS INSIDER
American businesses are raking in billions from the prison-industrial complex. It's time to get serious about dismantling this disgusting system.

MOTHERBOARD
Prison Phone Companies Are Recording Attorney-Client Calls Across the US

Bloomberg
Deals
NYC Pensions to Expand Prison Investment Ban With Platinum Equity

The New York Times
Service Meant to Monitor Inmates' Calls Could Track You, Too

THE NATION
If the NBA Stands for Racial Justice, What About Tom Gores?
The franchise owner of the Detroit Pistons also owns a predatory prison telephone company. Shouldn't that matter to the NBA?
By Dave Zirin

Los Angeles Times
Troubled companies made him billions. A prison phone investment made him enemies

yahoo!finance
How mass incarceration creates 'a tremendous amount of financial exploitation'

WSJ PRO PRIVATE EQUITY
Platinum Equity Reorganizes Prison-Phone Company Targeted by Elizabeth Warren

The Intercept
NOT SO SECURUS
Massive Hack of 70 Million Prisoner Phone Calls Indicates Violations of Attorney-Client Privilege

Full Frontal
@FullFrontalSamB
If you hate the Detroit Pistons or the insane cost incarcerated individuals must pay to make a phone call, have we got the piece for you! Sam sat down with @BiancaTylek of @WorthRises to learn how Tom Gores and the prison industry are making a fortune off of others' misfortune.

DEADSPIN
Pistons owner Tom Gores earns millions sucking the blood out of a broken prison system
By Dustin Foote | 12/21/20 3:22PM

Are prison services companies the next frontier for responsible investment in the age of Black Lives Matter?
As NGOs come after correctional services companies, what can investors do to make sure they don't bear the brunt of the risk?

ESSENCE 50 YEARS
As We Struggle To Stay Connected, Prison Calls Must Be Free
THIS MOTHER'S DAY, BLACK WOMEN, WHOSE HISTORY HAS BEEN PUNCTURED BY VULGAR ATTEMPTS TO POLICE VIOLENCE TO MASS CLOSE TO THEIR BABIES.
The New York Times
Daily Business Briefing >
JPay, a prison contractor, was fined over fees it charged to former prisoners.



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**Appendix:
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TRANSFORMATION AGENDA: ACCESSIBILITY & AFFORDABILITY

CLAIM	TRUTH
<p><i>“While Securus has reduced the average cost of calls by 30% over the past 3 years, not all consumers felt the same relief. The company pledges to work with all our institutional customers to broaden rate relief for more consumers by targeting the elimination of legacy outlier rates and reinvesting in the development innovations and tools to further reduce costs.”</i></p>	<p>Aventiv has never proactively or willingly reduced its rates. Its rates are forced down in response to advocate demands across the country, <i>despite</i> Aventiv’s protests and opposing lobbying efforts. In referring to their national percentage shift – a mere 15% in four years – Aventiv takes credit for hard-fought policy wins led by advocates around the country.</p> <p>Under immense pressure, in the past two years, Aventiv has reduced what it considers “outlier” rates. And while the percentage reduction may seem meaningful, the starting point of these outlier rates means that these rates remain outrageous. They have brought rates from \$25 for a 15-minute call to \$15 for a 15-minute call. It’s hard to celebrate such a change. As of late 2020, there were still more than 220 contracts that still charge over \$10 for a 15-minute call and more than 450 contracts at over \$5.</p>
<p><i>“Securus will reduce the application of third-party funding fees by investing in technology solutions where possible -- and negotiating lower rates where outside vendors are still required -- to provide savings to consumers of at least 35% on these fees by year end.”</i></p>	<p>Aventiv has renegotiated some relationships with third-party vendors to lower money transfer, but it’s not enough and blaming outside vendors reflects the inability of its executives to take responsibility for its predatory practices. More importantly, the majority of people subject to their service use their funding platforms, which carry egregious costs. In the free world, commercial payment processing fees are rarely more than 3%. But rather than charging \$0.30 for a \$10 money transfer into a <i>commissary account</i>, for example, JPay often charges \$3.95, and rates increase from there for larger transfers. Ironically, however, its fee to deposit money onto a <i>phone account</i> is \$3 for any transfer up to \$50. Why the difference? Because it’s the max allowable by the FCC, which only has authority over communications services. This is not a matter of vendors, this is Aventiv pointing fingers at some else for an exploitative practice it can unilaterally address.</p>

TRANSFORMATION AGENDA: ACCESSIBILITY & AFFORDABILITY

CLAIM	TRUTH
<p><i>“In 2019 Securus became the only service provider to announce full neutrality on the presence of site commissions and the provision of products regardless of the funding source and model determined by each locality. The organization will build on that in 2020 by working with all interested institutional customers on implementing these lower-cost-to-consumer alternatives.”</i></p>	<p>Years ago, Aventiv and other prison telecom corporations introduced site commissions to win contracts over traditional telecom corporations. For years, it passed on the cost of those site commissions to families. Now that budget-strapped states and counties have come to depend on those revenues to fund their correctional agencies and court systems, Aventiv claims neutrality and suggests these states and counties are to blame. While they certainly carry their fair share of the blame, Aventiv does not have clean hands here and is once again just pointing fingers, at its own customers, nonetheless. It must be more than neutral to undo the harm it has caused and denounce site commissions rather than continue using them to land pricey contracts or in the worst cases defend them in front of regulators. But beyond that, importantly, Aventiv still takes home a handsome percentage and sum on these contracts.</p> <p>With regard to neutrality on funding source — families or government — Aventiv’s hand was forced once again when they were caught lobbying in Connecticut against a bill that would have made phone calls free for incarcerated people and their families. They spent six weeks and \$40,000 fearmongering the Governor’s office and Department of Corrections, and thanks to their efforts the bill failed its first year. Their shift in position once again came as a result of pressure from advocates. And with their opposition forcefully withdrawn, the bill passed in a subsequent session.</p>

TRANSFORMATION AGENDA: TRANSPARENCY

CLAIM	TRUTH
<i>“Securus will provide a clear and simple recitation of call rates to both customers and consumers, ensuring that those call rates are always available online and at the time of each call before they are accepted.”</i>	This is not a new commitment. Since 2015, the FCC has required prison telecom corporations to “be transparent with regard to disclosure of their rates and policies.” Either Platinum Equity is admitting that Aventiv has openly flouted FCC regulations up to this point, or it is trying to take credit for a regulatory change that happened five years ago.
<i>“The Company will commission an annual report of inmate calling costs, produced and published by an independent third party, including a breakdown of what is being charged beyond the specific cost of the call (for example, additional costs necessary for the provision of safety protocols and service).”</i>	Every year, the FCC collects data from prison telecom corporations regarding their rates and charging practices to “ensure that they are just and reasonable.” And every year, Aventiv redacts thousands of data points before its records are released to the public, and it routinely contests data demands in litigation and public policy debates. Any independent effort to audit call rates cannot be explained by an effort to be transparent. It is instead an attempt to shape the exorbitant costs that Aventiv is charging families by fearmongering about safety and security. Unless it is paired with an effort to get government agencies to pay for surveillance technology, this audit is an insincere effort to justify rates that are paid by families.
<i>“Securus will publish by the middle of this year an industry-leading report detailing a terms-of-use policy for its products, and memorializing comprehensive data privacy standards.”</i>	Publishing terms of use and data privacy policy is not an industry-leading report. This effort to publish policies and standards is Aventiv’s attempt to clean its hands of the ways that law enforcement misuses its data. Aventiv is responsible for how its customers use the data it puts in their hands. This is a particularly ripe issue as the company faces public scrutiny over its repeated civil rights violations with the illegal recording of attorney-client calls.

TRANSFORMATION AGENDA: EDUCATION, REENTRY, & RECIDIVISM

CLAIM	TRUTH
<i>“Securus will immediately sign the Society for Human Resource Management Getting Talent Back to Work Pledge.”</i>	The Getting Talent Back to Work Pledge is a program sponsored by Koch Industries resulting from the First Step Act, which had many provisions that benefited the prison industry. Still, we support fair hiring for formerly incarcerated people, but have doubts about the sincerity of Aventiv, a company that exploits incarcerated people and their families, in hiring them. Aventiv has hired formerly incarcerated people in the past and used them to whitewash the corporation’s predatory practices.
<i>“The Company will contribute at least \$3 million in 2020 to efforts focused on reducing recidivism rates and improving reentry rates, including support for The Securus Foundation to connect justice agencies more closely to their communities utilizing technology.”</i>	<p>The Securus Foundation is a structure that Aventiv uses to whitewash its predatory practices. It puts a very small portion of the money that Aventiv has extracted from low-income people through its exorbitant pricing into the very organizations that serve them, collecting charitable tax benefits in the process. Aventiv is doing nothing more than returning money it should have never taken.</p> <p>Moreover, advocates have received calls from formerly incarcerated employees at The Securus Foundation asking to discuss active prison and jail contracts, a clear violation of tax law.</p>
<i>“The Company will create a post-incarceration scholarship program to facilitate the completion of post-secondary degrees begun under Securus’ existing educational product and service opportunities.”</i>	People leaving prison and jail would benefit more from having the money that they spend on phone calls and other Aventiv services than any scholarship program. Upon release, people are looking for ways to secure housing, pay bills, and buy food first. Thanks to the millions that Aventiv extracts from them every year, their ability to do so is hindered and, with that, their ability to pursue post-secondary degrees. In fact, this commitment is remarkably patronizing in that it takes money from incarcerated people and their families and purports to give it back to them if spent the way Aventiv deems appropriate.

TRANSFORMATION AGENDA: LISTENING & RESPONSIVENESS

CLAIM	TRUTH
<p><i>“Mr. Abel and other company executives will meet each quarter with families and individuals personally impacted by incarceration to hear their recommendations and address their concerns about the company’s products and services.”</i></p>	<p>Company executives have had opportunities to hear from people directly impacted by their services. Through representatives of The Securus Foundation, we agreed to an onsite visit and meetings with the company that never materialized.</p> <p>We also offered Tom Gores and other Platinum Equity executives the opportunity to meet with advocates and families, and they agreed in November 2019 to meet with us. We hoped to help shape the reforms that the company released, but executives later cancelled that meetings.</p> <p>Based on these past events, efforts to meet with and listen to directly impacted people are clearly insincere. We have significant concerns that Platinum Equity and Aventiv will exploit families through their proposed listening sessions to hear what they want to by targeting grantees of their philanthropic giving.</p>
<p><i>“Company leaders will also meet with corrections facility customers, correctional trade associations and advocates of alternative incarceration approaches to hear their recommendations and hear their concerns.”</i></p>	<p>Aventiv already meets with customers and correctional trade associations, a lot. In fact, Aventiv has paid for exhibitions at correctional trade shows for years. This is not news and certainly not where the problem is.</p>

TRANSFORMATION AGENDA: TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

CLAIM	TRUTH
<i>“Securus pledges to invest at least \$40 million this year in facility communication infrastructure for the advancement of public safety and community needs.”</i>	Numbers are all relative. While Aventiv has made substantial claim about infrastructure investment, the truth is that from 2019 to 2020, infrastructure investments declined 46% from \$91 million to \$50 million.
<i>“The Company will devote at least \$30 million to fund innovations in the development of secure products to take on the ever-evolving challenges facing correctional agencies in the new decade.”</i>	This is an investment in more surveillance technology for law enforcement. Existing technology (e.g., voice biometrics) is already critically concerning. We do not need new investments in surveillance technology, the cost of which will be passed on to struggling families just hoping to connect with their incarcerated loved ones.

THANK YOU

You can learn more at www.worthrises.org/wedeservebetter.

Please do not hesitate to reach out for more information.

