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For Immediate Release

**FCC CALLS ON CARRIERS TO ENSURE FREE CONSUMER TOOLS
ARE AVAILABLE TO BLOCK ROBOCALLS AND ISSUES NEW
ROBOCALL CEASE-AND-DESIST LETTERS**

Agency Actions Mark Continued Focus on Combatting Unwanted Robocalls

WASHINGTON, April 13, 2021—Today, FCC Acting Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel announced the FCC’s latest efforts to protect consumers from unwanted and scam robocalls and spoofed calls. The FCC’s Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau wrote to major phone companies and issued a Public Notice to ask about what free robocall blocking tools they make available to consumers. In addition, the FCC’s Enforcement Bureau issued two more cease-and-desist letters to phone service providers suspected of facilitating robocalls. Lastly, Rosenworcel announced the launch of a new effort to track the agency’s actions to implement the landmark anti-robocalls law, the Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence Act (TRACED Act).

“No one wants more unwanted robocalls in their life. I’m proud that we continue to find new ways to use all the tools at our disposal to make it clear to illegal robocallers that their days are numbered. We want them to know that we’re advocating on behalf of consumers everywhere to put an end to these calls,” **said Rosenworcel.**

Carrier Call-Blocking Tools Inquiry

In anticipation of the agency’s second Call Blocking Report, the FCC’s Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau issued a Public Notice and sent letters to major phone companies and third-party developers of call blocking tools to get updated information about their efforts to enable customers to block unwanted calls. The Bureau seeks to learn more about the tools available to consumers, their effectiveness, and any potential impact on 911 services and public safety. Key questions include:

- Whether the companies are offering call blocking tools to consumers at no charge.
- How the companies measure the effectiveness of blocking tools.
- What protections the companies have put in place to ensure that call blocking does not interfere with emergency services.

Companies are asked to provide detailed responses to the agency by April 30 date to inform the upcoming report. (The Commission’s first [Call Blocking Report](#) was released in June 2020.)

Cease-and-Desist Letters

The FCC also sent robocall cease-and-desist letters to two companies that appear to be transmitting multiple unlawful robocall campaigns that market auto warranties and credit card

debt reduction service, or claim, falsely, to be from the Social Security Administration or other well-known companies.

The robocall cease-and-desist letters instruct the voice providers to investigate and, if necessary, cease transmitting the identified traffic immediately and take steps to prevent its network from continuing to be a source of apparently illegal robocalls. Downstream voice service providers will be authorized to block all of the warned provider's traffic if that provider does not take steps to effectively mitigate illegal traffic within 48 hours. Similarly, the letters warn the providers that they will face the same consequences if they fail to inform the FCC and the Traceback Consortium within 14 days of the steps taken to implement effective measures to prevent customers from using the network to make illegal calls. Failure to act within the deadlines may result in the FCC issuing a notice to all U.S.-based voice service providers that they may permanently block *all* call traffic transmitting from the warned providers' network.

Today's letters follow a batch of six cease-and-desist letters sent by the agency last month. The initial cease-and-desist letters prompted all six companies to respond within the 48-hour deadline. Each provider stated that it had stopped carrying the offending traffic, and each provided additional information about how it will prevent customers from using the network to make illegal calls in the future.

TRACED Act Webpage Debut

Finally, the agency launched a new effort to itemize the completion of the FCC's work to protect consumers from illegal [robocalls](#), using the tools Congress gave us in the TRACED Act. The new webpage outlines the agency's progress in using its strengthened enforcement authority, progress on updated call blocking rules, and steps taken to implement new Caller ID authentication technology. It also details the agency's work to address one-ring scams, protect hospitals from illegal robocalls, and establish a reassigned numbers database.

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