



# NEWS

**Federal Communications Commission**  
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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.  
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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## **FCC PROPOSES \$5.2 MILLION FINE AGAINST U.S. TELECOM LONG DISTANCE, INC., FOR DECEPTIVE SLAMMING, CRAMMING, AND BILLING PRACTICES**

**Washington, D.C.** – For the second time in as many months, the Federal Communications Commission has proposed a multi-million dollar forfeiture against a telephone carrier for apparently engaging in deceptive marketing practices, changing consumers’ preferred long distance carriers without proper authorization (“slamming”), billing consumers for unauthorized charges (“cramming”), and failing to describe telephone charges plainly and clearly as required by federal law. Today’s enforcement action proposes a \$5.23 million forfeiture against U.S. Telecom Long Distance, Inc. (USLTD).

Numerous consumers complained that USLTD’s telemarketers had tricked them into believing that the telemarketers were calling on behalf of the consumers’ existing long distance providers. The consumers were then shocked to learn that USLTD had switched their preferred long distance carrier and billed them for charges they had not authorized. In many cases, USLTD apparently took advantage of consumers by masking the true purpose of the call and then profiting from their obvious confusion about the questions they were asked. Many of the deceived consumers were elderly, hearing impaired, or infirm. Several consumers also claimed that USLTD representatives pretended to be calling from the FCC itself.

With today’s action, the Commission continues to make good on prior warnings that it will aggressively pursue those engaged in deceptive conduct. In fact, because of the egregious nature of USLTD’s apparent violations, the FCC increased the proposed forfeiture by approximately \$3 million. Combined with last month’s action against Consumer Telcom, Inc., the FCC has now proposed nearly \$9 million in forfeitures in recent enforcement actions for cramming, slamming, and misrepresentation.

Link to Notice of Apparent Liability: [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/FCC-14-4A1.pdf](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-14-4A1.pdf)

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