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For Immediate Release**FCC PLANS \$29.6 MILLION FINE FOR EGREGIOUS TREATMENT OF CONSUMERS AND OBSTRUCTION OF INVESTIGATION*****Company Apparently Switched Consumers' Carriers, Added Fees, and Created Fraudulent Verification Recordings – Even Submitted Them to the FCC***

WASHINGTON, February 12, 2016 – The Federal Communications Commission today announced a \$29,600,000 proposed fine against four related long distance carriers for a variety of apparent fraudulent, deceptive, and manipulative practices targeting consumers with Hispanic surnames. In today's action, the Commission asserts that OneLink Communications, Inc., TeleDias Communications, Inc., TeleUno, Inc., and Cytel, Inc., "slammed" consumers by switching their long distance carriers without authorization and "crammed" unauthorized charges onto consumers' bills. In addition, it is alleged the companies, which operate as a single enterprise, fabricated audio recordings that they then submitted to the FCC as "proof" the consumers authorized these changes and charges.

"Charging consumers for services they did not want or authorize is simply unacceptable," said Enforcement Bureau Chief Travis LeBlanc. "We are committed to combating slamming and cramming because these unjust and unreasonable practices result in consumers paying for services they never requested or received, and spending their time trying to reverse unauthorized carrier charges."

Over 140 consumers filed complaints with the FCC after discovering that the companies allegedly switched their long distance carriers and charged them for new services without their authorization. Some consumers alleged that the companies' telemarketers pretended to be from the post office calling about a nonexistent package delivery to obtain information to create fake consumer authorization recordings. In other cases, it appears the companies impersonated individuals in the authorization recordings. The companies then allegedly provided the fake authorizations to the FCC in response to its investigation into the consumer complaints.

Even after consumers repeatedly contacted the companies about the alleged unauthorized charges and carrier switches, the companies purportedly refused to provide refunds until consumers filed complaints with the FCC, Better Business Bureau, or state regulators. The FCC found that the companies' apparent unauthorized charges and deceptive marketing calls constituted "unjust and unreasonable" practices under the Communications Act. The FCC also determined that the companies apparently violated federal law by submitting fake consumer authorizations and providing false and misleading information to the FCC during its investigation.

In today's action, formally called a Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture, the FCC also makes clear that, following a reasonable chance for the companies to respond to the allegations, the Commission may initiate proceedings that could result in revocation of the companies' authorizations to operate.

For more information about the FCC's rules protecting consumers from unauthorized charges on telephone bills, see the FCC consumer guides regarding cramming at <http://go.usa.gov/cyvhh>, and slamming at <http://go.usa.gov/cyvhh>.

To file a complaint with the FCC, go to <https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov/hc/en-us> or contact the FCC's Consumer Center by calling 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice or 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY; faxing 1-866-418-0232; or by writing to:

Federal Communications Commission
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

The Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture is available at: <https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-plans-296-million-fine-slamming-cramming-and-obstruction>.

Action by the Commission February 12, 2016 by Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture (FCC 16-14). Chairman Wheeler, Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel and Pai approving. Commissioner O'Rielly approving in part and dissenting in part. Commissioner Pai issuing a statement.

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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).