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For Immediate Release**FCC TO FINE TWO INDIVIDUALS \$25,000 EACH FOR FALSIFYING CALLER ID INFORMATION WITH THE INTENT TO HARM**

WASHINGTON, August 2, 2016 – The Federal Communications Commission’s Enforcement Bureau today announced plans to fine two New York-area men for apparently using false caller ID numbers – also known as spoofing— to carry out harassing phone calls to the ex-wife of one of the men. Mr. Steven Blumenstock of East Rockaway, N.Y., and Gary Braver of North Bellmore, N.Y., each face a proposed \$25,000 fine for spoofing the phone numbers of Ms. Robin Braver’s parents, her child’s school district, Sing Sing Correctional Facility, the U.S. Postal Service, and other entities to trick Ms. Braver into answering the phone so that Mr. Blumenstock and Mr. Braver could deliver harassing messages to her.

“It is against the law for anyone to harass, defraud, or terrorize another person by spoofing or deliberately manipulating their caller ID,” said Enforcement Bureau Chief Travis LeBlanc. “Spoofing is particularly disturbing when used to trick consumers into believing that the calls are from family members or representatives of banks, creditors, insurance companies, and even the government.”

In late 2015, the National Network to End Domestic Violence contacted the Bureau regarding a series of spoofed telephone calls received by Ms. Braver. The Bureau’s investigation traced those calls to Mr. Blumenstock and Mr. Braver and found that the men have made at least 31 spoofed telephone calls to Ms. Braver, sometimes calling multiple times a day.

Mr. Blumenstock used a third-party spoofing service to make menacing calls at the direction or with the participation of Mr. Braver even though Ms. Braver had a protection order against her ex-husband. Mr. Blumenstock was subsequently arrested and charged by the Nassau County Police Department of New York with stalking and aggravated harassment. A criminal case against Mr. Blumenstock is ongoing.

The Truth in Caller ID Act of 2009 and the Commission’s rules prohibit spoofing with the intent to cause harm, defraud, or wrongfully obtain anything of value. Consumers rely on caller ID information to make decisions about what calls to accept, ignore, or block. Increasingly, bad actors use inexpensive third-party services to illegally spoof the caller ID information of businesses, government facilities, and other legitimate sources in order to gain unauthorized access to consumer information, place false emergency calls to law enforcement (otherwise known as “swatting”), and facilitate other criminal activities. Congress and the Commission recognized that criminals also use spoofing to trick victims into answering calls for the purposes of harassment and stalking. Accurate caller ID information is a vital tool that consumers use to protect their privacy, avoid fraud, and ensure peace of mind.

Today’s action, known as a Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture (NAL), is available at: https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-16-872A1.pdf. An NAL details the Commission’s

allegations of unlawful conduct, and proposes a monetary forfeiture for such conduct. The description of the NAL set forth herein and the apparent violations found in the NAL should be treated as allegations.

For more information about the FCC's rules protecting consumers from unlawful spoofing, see the FCC consumer guide regarding [caller ID and spoofing](#).

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

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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).