

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Advanced Methods to Target and Eliminate Unlawful Robocalls*, CG Docket No. 17-59

As my colleagues may recall, in September, my cell phone rang in the middle of our open meeting. Not surprisingly, when I looked at the number after the meeting, it was a robocall. While these calls can be a nuisance (and sometimes an embarrassment), they can also be malicious. Take, for example, IRS scam calls. A robocaller will “spoof” an IRS phone number so that their call appears in the victim’s caller ID as coming from the IRS and then the imposter will attempt to defraud the victim.

Today, we take action to combat these types of illegal robocalls. Specifically, we allow providers to block calls in response to so-called “Do Not Originate” requests. For instance, entities like the IRS that have phone numbers that are never used to make outbound calls can request that calls purporting to be from those numbers be blocked in order to prevent malicious spoofing.

In today’s Order, we also adopt rules permitting providers to block calls from unassigned numbers. As the Order explains, no subscriber can originate a call from an unassigned number, so these calls are highly likely to be fraudulent.

Importantly, we also make clear that the rules we’re adopting today do not authorize the blocking of 911 calls under any circumstance.

Today’s action is not a silver bullet. But it is a welcome part of the Commission’s new and much broader effort to address the problem of illegal robocalls. Indeed, I am glad that in 2017, the Commission elevated robocalls to our top enforcement priority. Combatting them will require action on many fronts, from rulemakings, to enforcement actions, to industry and stakeholder engagement. So I support the Commission’s efforts in all of these areas. And I want to thank in particular the staff of the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau for their work on this item. It has my support.