

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Adrian Abramovich, Marketing Leaders, Inc. and Marketing Leaders Inc., File No. EB-TCD-15-00020488, Forfeiture Order*

When I was in high school, I remember our family getting an external caller ID device. It was a white box, about the size of a deck of cards, that you plugged into your landline phone. It was an exciting time in the Carr household to be sure.

The ability to see who was calling before picking up the phone was an innovative idea back then. But Caller ID is now something we've come to rely on to help us decide whether to trust the caller on the other end of the line.

Congress recognized this and the value of accurate, reliable caller ID information when it passed the Truth in Caller ID Act. That law focuses on the harms to consumers and businesses alike when bad actors spoof or mask their identities as part of a scheme to defraud or cause harm.

We have one of the worst such examples before us today. The record shows that over just one three-month period, Abramovich or his company placed over 90 million illegally spoofed robocalls. Through a practice known as "neighbor spoofing"—which involves displaying the first six digits of his targets' phone numbers—Abramovich apparently found a way to increase the likelihood that consumers would pick up the phone. Once on the line, they'd be told they were speaking with a reputable company, but then the bait and switch would come. Call center workers would try to sell them time shares or vacation packages from groups unrelated to the brand name company. This not only defrauded consumers but harmed the reputation of those legitimate businesses. In this case, his scheme also endangered public safety by overwhelming an emergency paging service that was not equipped to handle large volumes of voice calls.

So I am glad that the Commission is continuing to treat illegal robocalls as our top enforcement priority and that, by imposing this \$120,000,000 penalty, we are taking appropriately strong action in this case.

Thank you to the staff of the Enforcement Bureau for your diligent work on this important investigation. The Order has my support.