

Media Contact:

Will Wiquist, (202) 418-0509
will.wiquist@fcc.gov

For Immediate Release

**FCC PROPOSES RULES TO COMBAT ILLEGAL SPOOFED
TEXT MESSAGES & INTERNATIONAL CALLS**

WASHINGTON, February 14, 2019—The Federal Communications Commission today proposed rules banning illegal spoofed text messages and international calls. The proposed rules would enable the agency to address consumer concerns about unwanted text messages and scam calls from overseas.

The Truth in Caller ID Act of 2009 prohibits anyone from transmitting misleading or inaccurate caller ID information (“spoofing”) with the intent to defraud, cause harm, or wrongly obtain anything of value. However, until the recent passage of the RAY BAUM’S Act of 2018, these consumer protections did not extend to text messages or international calls. Today’s proposed rules would implement this new legislation, extending these prohibitions to short message service (SMS) and multimedia message service (MMS) text messages, calls originating from outside the United States to recipients within the United States, and additional types of voice calls, such as one-way interconnected VoIP calls.

Unwanted calls—including malicious spoofed calls and illegal robocalls—are the top consumer complaint the FCC receives each year, accounting for over 60 percent of the total complaints received. Combatting these unwanted calls is the agency’s top consumer protection priority. The FCC’s enforcement of the Truth in Caller ID Act resulted in over \$200 million in fines issued in 2018 alone.

Today’s proposed rules, if adopted, would ensure that the FCC is also able to bring enforcement actions against bad actors who spoof text messages and spoofer who seek out victims in this country from overseas. The Commission received more than 52,000 complaints about spoofed calls in 2018. It is widely believed that many spoofed calls originate from overseas call centers.

While there are necessary and legal uses of spoofing technology, it can also be a powerful tool used by scam callers to trick consumers into answering calls and deceive them into thinking that the scammer is calling from a legitimate entity. To learn more about spoofing, visit our consumer guide at: <https://www.fcc.gov/spoofing>.

Action by the Commission February 14, 2019 by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 19-12). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O’Rielly, Carr, Rosenworcel, and Starks approving and issuing separate statements.

WC Docket Nos. 18-335, 11-39

###

Office of Media Relations: (202) 418-0500
ASL Videophone: (844) 432-2275
TTY: (888) 835-5322
Twitter: @FCC
www.fcc.gov/media-relations

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).