



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

April 3, 2020

The Honorable Edward J. Markey  
United States Senate  
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Markey:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to curb robocalls—particularly new robocall campaigns attempting to carry out coronavirus/COVID-19-related fraud and scams. I agree with you that these unconscionable illegal calls pose a serious threat, and we are taking all necessary steps to protect the public.

That's one reason why the Commission last month partnered with the Federal Trade Commission, the U.S. Department of Justice, and USTelecom's Industry Traceback Group to tackle the threat of COVID-19 robocall scams. These efforts are already bearing fruit. Just today, the FCC's Enforcement Bureau and the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection issued demand letters to three gateway providers that are facilitating the COVID-19 robocall scams originating overseas. The letters warned these gateway providers that they must cut off these calls or face serious consequences. Unless these gateway providers stop bringing these calls into the United States in the next 48 hours, other phone companies will be able to begin blocking *all* traffic from these gateway providers' networks. The FCC and FTC have been working closely with the U.S. Department of Justice on this first-of-its-kind effort to stop scammers from reaching American consumers.

Enforcement is not the only action that the Commission is taking to combat all types of illegal robocalls. We are tackling the problem head-on with a multi-pronged approach—such as allowing telephone providers to block by default suspected malicious and illegal calls, taking aggressive enforcement actions against robocall violators, and applying anti-spoofing prohibitions to international robocalls.

As you note, almost immediately upon learning about these new robocall scams related to the coronavirus pandemic, our Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau created and launched the "COVID-19 Consumer Warnings and Safety Tips" webpage and released a Consumer Alert to increase awareness. Our webpage, [www.fcc.gov/covid-scams](http://www.fcc.gov/covid-scams), is being updated as new scams emerge, and we hope that consumers will continue to use it to protect themselves from these illegal calls.

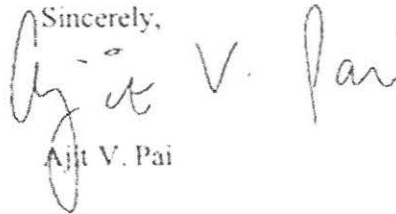
We are also on-track with implementation of the provisions in the TRACED Act, which gives the Commission new tools and authority to crack down on these problematic calls. For example, we have issued rules to establish a process to select a private-led consortium to trace back the origin of suspected unlawful robocalls. We have launched the Hospital Robocall

Protection Group and are seeking nominations as soon as possible in order to get this important Advisory Committee to work.

And just this week, the Commission mandated voice service providers to implement caller ID authentication using the STIR/SHAKEN framework. This technology enables phone companies to verify the caller ID information that is transmitted with a call and will help them identify calls with illegally spoofed caller ID information before those calls reach Americans' phones. I'm pleased that my fellow commissioners joined me in taking this significant step towards ending the scourge of spoofed robocalls—a step supported by Congress's passage of the TRACED Act.

Please be assured that the Commission will continue its implementation of the remaining requirements of the TRACED Act and continue our uncompromising enforcement both during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. I am confident that our efforts will help mitigate the impact of these new calls on consumers.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,  
  
Ajit V. Pai



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April 3, 2020

The Honorable John Thune  
United States Senate  
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

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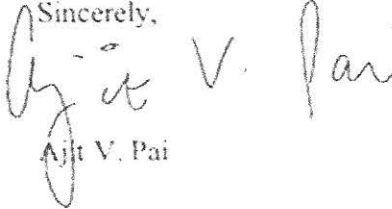
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