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For Immediate Release**FCC TAKES ACTION TO PROTECT AMERICAN CONSUMERS
FROM ONE-RING PHONE SCAMS*****Foreign Robocallers Try to Prompt Pricey Callbacks from American Consumers***

WASHINGTON, April 28, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission today issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking aimed at better protecting Americans from one-ring scam calls. One-ring scam calls occur when a call placed to a consumer’s phone rings just once, using international toll-generating numbers that charge large fees per minute when consumers call back. The FCC’s proposal is the latest step to address this problem; it follows a consumer alert the agency issued in May 2019 and implements one section of the recently passed Pallone-Thune Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence Act (TRACED Act).

“One-ring scams are annoying and pernicious, waking up many Americans with confusing calls in the middle of the night and tricking them out of their money if they call back,” said FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. “With this effort, this agency shows it’s serious about aggressively combating this scam. I look forward to hearing from the public about their ideas for putting an end to this. And in the meantime, I urge them not to call back if they get calls like this.”

One-ring scammers call American consumers from a foreign country with a number that appears to come from the United States. After a single ring, the scammer hangs up, enticing the consumer to return the “missed call.” Scammers may also leave consumers a voice mail message with a false pretext for the consumer to call them back. In either instance, U.S. consumers incur significant phone charges (of which the scammer gets a share) when they return the international call. Callers often call in the middle of the night and may call multiple times in a row in order to create an appearance of urgency while trying to ensure the call is not answered.

Last year, the Commission issued a consumer alert with tips for consumers to protect themselves. The FCC also [advises consumers](#) to not answer or return any calls from numbers they do not recognize, to check whether an unfamiliar number has an international area code before returning the call, and to ask their phone company to block outgoing international calls if they do not make such calls.

In this NPRM, the FCC seeks comment on proposals for implementing the TRACED Act’s requirements to further protect consumers from the one-ring scam, including: allowing voice service providers to block calls highly likely to be associated with a one-ring scam; working with federal, state, and foreign law enforcement and government agencies to combat one-ring scams; building on existing consumer education and outreach efforts; enhancing FCC work

with entities that provide call-blocking services; and seeking consensus on what obligations international gateway providers should have in the efforts to stop these calls.

The FCC's Enforcement Bureau and the Federal Trade Commission recently sent [letters](#) to three gateway providers suspected of facilitating COVID-19-related scam robocalls, warning them that if they did not stop such traffic, the Commission would authorize other U.S. voice service providers to block all calls entering the U.S. via these gateway providers. Within 24 hours, those gateway providers stopped carrying those scam robocalls. The NPRM seeks comment on whether such a model could be extended to combat one-ring scam calls.

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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).