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For Immediate Release

FCC DESIGNATES ROBOCALL TRACEBACK MANAGER

Agency Designates USTelecom’s Industry Traceback Group as the Official Consortium of Information Gathering to Locate Unlawful Robocallers

WASHINGTON, July 27, 2020—The FCC’s Enforcement Bureau today designated the official consortium for coordinating industry-led efforts to trace back the origin of suspected unlawful robocalls. The Bureau [selected](#) USTelecom – the Broadband Association’s Industry Traceback Group to officially coordinate these activities. Industry traceback efforts are a vital resource for the Bureau in tracking down unlawful, spoofed robocalls and uncovering the companies and individuals that help facilitate large-scale robocall campaigns.

“The Industry Traceback Group has been and will continue to be a vital partner in our pursuit of unlawful robocallers,” said Rosemary Harold, Chief of the Enforcement Bureau.

“Protecting consumers against illegal spoofing and robocalls is our top consumer protection priority, and this industry consortium is a key contributor.”

The Industry Traceback Group is a collaborative group comprised of voice service providers across wireline, wireless, VoIP, and cable services. And for the last few years, Commission staff and the Industry Traceback Group have worked together to develop an effective traceback process that significantly assists the Commission’s enforcement efforts.

Congress formally acknowledged the benefits of this collaboration in the TRACED Act of 2019, which required the Commission to issue rules “for the registration of a single consortium that conducts private-led efforts to trace back the origin of suspected unlawful robocalls.” The Commission adopted these rules in March and directed the Enforcement Bureau to select an entity to assume the role of registered consortium.

The Industry Traceback Group has already played a critical role in supporting FCC Enforcement Bureau investigations, including:

- **Cutting Off COVID-19 Scam Robocalls** – In April, the FCC and the Federal Trade Commission warned three gateway providers, identified by the Industry Traceback Group, against continuing to facilitate COVID-19-related scam robocalls originating overseas. The agencies successfully cut off these calls by warning the providers that they had to immediately stop bringing these calls into the United States or other phone companies would be able to begin blocking all traffic from these gateway providers’ networks. And in May, the FCC and FTC successfully demanded that still more gateway providers, identified by the Industry Traceback Group, allowing COVID-19 pandemic-related scam robocalls into the United States cut off this traffic or face these serious consequences.

- **\$225 Million Proposed Spoofing Fine** – In June, the FCC proposed the largest fine in its history against Texas-based health insurance telemarketers for apparently making approximately 1 billion illegally spoofed robocalls. The Industry Traceback Group determined that approximately 23.6 million health insurance robocalls were crossing the networks of the four largest wireless carriers each day. The FCC Enforcement Bureau’s investigation found that a large portion of this unwelcome robocall traffic apparently was driven by one robocall operation. The target also admitted to the Industry Traceback Group that he knowingly called consumers on the Do Not Call list, that he made millions of calls per day, and that he was using spoofed numbers.

The TRACED Act also requires the Commission to seek comment on the status of these traceback efforts. As a result, the Bureau today [released](#) a Public Notice seeking public input on this work.

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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).