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For Immediate Release

**FCC FINES ARIZONA COMPANY \$37.5 MILLION FOR MAKING
SPOOFED TELEMARKETING CALLS**

***Many Calls Displayed Caller ID Information of Innocent Arizona Consumers, Not
Telemarketer Making the Calls***

WASHINGTON, October 27, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission today fined Affordable Enterprises of Arizona \$37.5 million for making millions of illegally spoofed telemarketing calls. Most notably, the company used unassigned phone numbers or numbers that, in many instances, belonged to innocent Arizona consumers and placed them in the caller ID of their telemarketing calls. By using these numbers, the company was able to appear to be calling from local phone numbers and to avoid receiving angry callbacks when making spoofed telemarketing calls to sell home improvement and remodeling services.

The Tucson-based company made more than 2.3 million unlawful spoofed telemarketing calls to Arizonans during a 14-month span starting in 2016. The company manipulated the caller ID information so that many calls appeared to come from consumers who were unconnected to the company. Calls also appeared to come from unassigned phone numbers and numbers assigned to pre-paid “burner” phones. In each case, the caller ID was spoofed, and consumers were unable to identify from the caller ID that the call was from Affordable Enterprises. The Truth in Caller ID Act prohibits anyone from transmitting misleading or inaccurate caller ID information with the intent to defraud, cause harm or wrongly obtain anything of value.

One Arizonan received more than five calls per day on her cell phone from consumers complaining about telemarketing calls they thought she had made. Records show that Affordable Enterprises had made spoofed telemarketing calls to consumers that appeared to be coming from the cell phone of this innocent Arizonan. Such calling tactics harm both the consumers receiving the deceptive calls and those whose numbers are essentially commandeered by the telemarketer.

The FCC Enforcement Bureau’s investigation of Affordable started with a tip from a former employee of the company and relied on, among other things, subpoenaed phone records and extensive review of consumer complaints. Based on the evidence gathered in this investigation and the language of the Truth in Caller ID Act, the Commission today rejected the arguments made by Affordable as to why the FCC should not impose a forfeiture on the company or, in the alternative, only impose a dramatically reduced forfeiture.

Action by the Commission October 27, 2020 by Forfeiture Order (FCC 20-149). Chairman Pai, Commissioners Carr, Rosenworcel, and Starks approving. Commissioner O’Rielly approving in part and dissenting in part. Chairman Pai and Commissioner Starks issuing separate statements.

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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).