

Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau Presentation to Commissioners
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FCC Open Commission Meeting
January 13, 2021

CGB (Slide 1)

Thank you, and good morning Chairman Pai and Commissioners. Today, I am pleased to provide a report on the work of the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau over the last four years. CGB is home to 8 divisions and offices, and while our portfolio is broad and diverse, our focus is on protecting and educating American consumers.

Robocalls (Slide 2)

One of CGB's top priorities has been fighting the scourge of unwanted and illegal robocalls, and we've led multiple actions to tackle this problem. In 2017, the Commission adopted a first-of-its-kind Order enabling voice service providers to block calls from numbers that are obviously spoofed, such as those with invalid, unused or unallocated numbers. A year and a half later, the Commission empowered providers to better protect consumers by blocking unwanted calls based on reasonable analytics on a default basis. Last summer, the Commission offered providers safe harbors to encourage more of them to block these calls; and just a few weeks ago, the Commission went a step further, requiring providers to take steps to ensure their networks are not used to transmit illegal robocalls.

We are also establishing a Database that will enable any caller to determine whether a phone number has been potentially reassigned, thus ensuring that consumers don't receive calls that are meant for a prior subscriber. And the Commission recently adopted restrictions on calls from federal, state and local government contractors, and adopted limits for the first time on the number of non-telemarketing calls to home phones.

I am pleased to report that these actions, along with anti-robocall efforts undertaken by the Enforcement Bureau and the Wireline Competition Bureau, are beginning to have a positive impact. For example, according to the YouMail Robocall Index, the number of robocalls in the United States dropped by more than 20% in 2020, the first annual drop in the history of the Index.

Accessibility (Slide 3)

Last year, CGB highlighted two important milestones – the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the 10th anniversary of the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act. Over the last four years, we have worked to improve and safeguard access to communications for those with disabilities and improve telecommunications relay services. In 2018, the Commission strengthened the effectiveness and efficiency of captioned telephone services, determining that they could be provided using automatic speech recognition without the need for live communications assistants. Last year, CGB certified three providers to use this technology, each of which showed they will meet the Commission's minimum standards and perform as well or better than existing services.

Video relay services can now be provided by communications assistants working at home, expanding the pool of qualified interpreters for people who use sign language to make video calls, and consumers can place direct sign-language video calls to customer support call centers. In its efforts to rein in waste, fraud and abuse of the federally-administered relay services fund, the Commission has adopted reforms that, by 2022, will save the fund approximately \$1.5 billion, making it possible to continue supporting vital accessibility services.

Tribal and Intergovernmental (Slide 4)

During the last four years, the Commission has been especially active in bringing advanced communications services to Tribal communities. CGB's Office of Native Affairs and Policy has visited 24 Native nations, hosted 43 events, and held 20 Tribal consultations. It has conducted outreach to Native nations regarding 5G network deployment and infrastructure streamlining, and played a critical role with respect to the 2.5 GHz Rural Tribal Priority Window. Its work with the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau to reach every federally recognized Tribe resulted in over 400 applications, with 182 licenses granted to date. And our Native Nations Communications Task Force recently submitted important recommendations to the Commission on improving Tribal broadband deployment and Tribal engagement.

CGB oversaw the Hospital Robocall Protection Group, which last month provided the Commission with best practices on how to combat robocalls to hospitals. We also oversee the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee, which in 2019 submitted key proposals on multilingual emergency alerting, disaster response coordination and telemedicine.

Consumers (Education and Outreach) (Slide 5)

CGB has aggressively pursued consumer outreach and awareness initiatives regarding illegal and unwanted robocalls and Caller ID spoofing. Our Rural Tours series featured 51 public events and 54 meetings with local officials, covering 4,600 miles over 13 states. We co-hosted events such as a Robocalls Workshop and a Tech Expo with the Federal Trade Commission, and a program with a national non-profit agency that distributed over 20,000 FCC tip cards inside grocery stores.

A critical consumer education tool is our [fcc.gov/consumers](https://www.fcc.gov/consumers) website. Its content has averaged over 3.5 million page-views per year and showcases our first in-house animated videos. In addition, all of our consumer publications are available in multiple languages, and we provided Spanish translation support to the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau during several emergencies over the last few years.

Consumers (Complaints) (Slide 6)

CGB processes approximately 317,000 consumer complaints per year. Over the last four years, we have served consumer complaints on providers within an average of two business days, with a 99% provider response rate. We also manage the FCC's call center, and answer around 120,000 calls per year. I'm especially proud of the work staff did last year to rapidly transition from a completely in-house call center to a completely remote one in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with no service interruptions.

COVID-19 (Slide 7)

CGB has taken several steps during the COVID-19 pandemic to help consumers. Early in the pandemic, we clarified our rules so that consumers could be contacted by authorities with critical COVID-related information such as testing availability, quarantines and shelter-in-place requirements. We also ensured that relay services remained available and that critical information about the pandemic was accessible to people with disabilities. We created a COVID-19 consumer resources webpage and hosted a virtual event regarding COVID scams. We also tracked over 150 companies that went above and beyond Chairman Pai's Keep Americans Connected pledge. Working with other Bureaus, we've also

raised awareness about Lifeline waivers, telehealth programs, and other initiatives to help consumers during the pandemic.

Thank You! (Slide 8)

In closing, I would like to thank the tireless and dedicated staff of CGB. Because of time constraints, I couldn't possibly include all of the incredible work CGB staff has performed over the last four years. I am greatly honored to be working alongside you. Each and every day you make a positive impact on American consumers.

Lastly, thank you to Chairman Pai and all the Commissioners for your support of the Bureau over the last four years. And to Chairman Pai, your focus during this pandemic on the health and well-being of agency staff is greatly appreciated and will be long-remembered.

Thank you again for the opportunity to highlight the great work of CGB.

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