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For Immediate Release

**FCC BEGINS RULEMAKING TO COMBAT SCAMS USED TO
COMMANDEER CONSUMERS' CELL PHONE ACCOUNTS**

Seeks Input on Addressing SIM Swapping & Port-Out Fraud

WASHINGTON, September 30, 2021—The Federal Communications Commission today began a formal rulemaking process with the goal of confronting subscriber identity module (SIM) swapping scams and port-out fraud, both of which bad actors use to steal consumers' cell phone accounts without ever gaining physical control of a consumer's phone.”

The FCC has received numerous complaints from consumers who have suffered significant distress, inconvenience, and financial harm as a result of SIM swapping and port-out fraud. In addition, recent data breaches have exposed customer information that could potentially make it easier to pull off these kinds of attacks.

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking proposes various actions to proactively address the risk of follow-on attacks using stolen data to reduce the risk of additional harm to consumers from recent data breaches. It proposes to amend the Customer Proprietary Network Information (CPNI) and Local Number Portability rules to require carriers to adopt secure methods of authenticating a customer before redirecting a customer's phone number to a new device or carrier. It also proposes requiring providers to immediately notify customers whenever a SIM change or port request is made on customers' accounts.

What is SIM Swapping? SIM swapping takes place when a bad actor convinces a victim's wireless carrier to transfer the victim's service from the victim's cell phone to a cell phone in the bad actor's possession. More information for consumers about these scams is available at: <https://go.usa.gov/xMNUF>.

What is port-out fraud? Port-out fraud takes place when the bad actor, posing as the victim, opens an account with a carrier other than the victim's current carrier. The bad actor then arranges for the victim's phone number to be transferred to (or “ported out”) to the account with the new carrier controlled by the bad actor. An FCC consumer guide on guarding against this type of fraud is available at: <https://go.usa.gov/xMNUH>.

Action by the Commission September 30, 2021 by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 21-102). Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr, Starks, and Simington approving. Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel and Commissioner Starks issuing separate statements.

WC Docket No. 21-341

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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).