

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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October 31, 2023

The Honorable Lina Khan
Chair
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20580

The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel
Chair
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street NE
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chair Khan and Chair Rosenworcel:

We write to express our grave concerns about the rise of voice cloning technology that can be used to defraud and scam Americans by impersonating familiar voices. These scams prey on our best instincts to help our loved ones in need, cause great distress, and raise security concerns.

Across the country, fraudsters are using artificial intelligence (AI) voice cloning technology to trick people into giving up their personal information or money. Recently in Minnesota, a father received a call from someone that sounded just like his son, crying “mom, dad, can you hear me?” He and his wife were terrified—they had not heard from their son, a Marine deployed abroad, in weeks. Thankfully, the father was able to decipher that the call was not from his son, but was an impersonation of his son’s voice generated by AI technology. One can only imagine the emotional toll on any parent thinking their child, particularly one abroad serving our country, was in peril.

As generative AI advances, these stories are becoming far too common. Scammers only need a short sample of an individual’s voice to generate an authentic-sounding imitation. They can pull the sample and backstory from public sources like social media. This summer in Iowa, one couple received a panicked call from a voice that sounded like their son, who was on his way to basic training, saying he was in jail and needed \$7,000 for bail.¹ Luckily this couple was able to reach their son, who was safe at home, before wiring the money. In Utah, another man got a call from a voice clone that sounded like his grandson, claiming to need \$5,000 in bail after a car crash.² These scams are putting too many parents and grandparents through this emotional toll, and as technology improves, voice clones will only become more convincing.

¹ CBS 2 Iowa, “A.I. scammers are cloning voices to take advantage of unsuspecting victims,” Nada Shamah, June 7, 2023. <https://cbs2iowa.com/news/local/ai-scammers-are-cloning-voices-to-take-advantage-of-unsuspecting-victims>

² KSLTV, “Expert: Scams more convincing with artificial intelligence,” Andrew Adams, August 4, 2023. <https://ksltv.com/574505/expert-scams-more-convincing-with-artificial-intelligence/#:~:text=In%20the%20moment%2C%20David%20Allan,bail%20him%20out%20of%20there>

While we appreciate the informational notices on this topic that your agencies recently issued, more can be done to educate Americans about these frauds and to help prevent them from happening. Towards that end, we look forward to partnering with your agencies to prevent exploitative scams that use voice cloning technology. Please respond to the following questions by November 17.

1. What steps are your agencies taking to educate the American people, prevent these frauds, and enforce current laws to crack down on fraudulent uses of voice cloning technology?
2. Based on the consumer alerts and investigations you have already done, what have you learned about this issue?
3. What resources are you devoting to combat this type of fraud, and are additional resources necessary?
4. Are current laws sufficient to prevent these frauds and punish perpetrators, or do you believe additional authority is needed?

Thank you very much for your efforts to combat this distressing type of scam. We look forward to working with you to protect all Americans from this growing fraud.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator