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For Immediate Release

FCC ISSUES LATEST CEASE & DESIST ROBOCALL WARNINGS

Represents First Enforcement Action Related to a Complaint Received Through the FCC's Private Entity Reporting Portal

WASHINGTON, December 20, 2023—The FCC's Robocall Response Team today ordered two companies, Solid Double and CallWin, to cease and desist their transmission of apparently illegal robocalls that have targeted American consumers. The letter issued to Solid Double represents the first enforcement action taken by the FCC in response to a complaint received through the <u>Private Entity Robocall and Spoofing Portal</u>. The Commission established the portal pursuant to the TRACED Act to receive information about robocalls and spoofing incidents from private entities, including small businesses and non-governmental entities.

Both Solid Double and CallWin are thus required to investigate the apparently illegal traffic, determine the source of such traffic, prevent its continuation, and prevent new or renewing customers from generating illegal robocalls on their respective networks. These companies must, within 48 hours, report to the FCC's Enforcement Bureau on the steps taken to mitigate the apparently illegal traffic and must, within 14 days, detail for the Bureau the steps taken to prevent a reoccurrence.

"If robocallers continue to make illegal calls that target consumers, we're prepared to use every took in our toolbox to knock them offline and hold these violators accountable," **said Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel.**

"This is an excellent example of a private company working with the Enforcement Bureau to identify bad actors using its business telephone number to trick consumers. The FCC's enforcement tools allow us to track down those facilitating illegal robocall campaigns, warn them to stop, and, if they persist, cut them off quickly. Providers that allow illegal traffic face serious consequences. We will not hesitate to take decisive action to protect consumers," said Enforcement Bureau Chief Loyaan Egal.

What's New:

Solid Double apparently originated illegal spoofed robocall traffic on behalf of one or more of its clients – including one identified as "Sham Telecom." The Bureau opened an investigation after receiving a complaint from a company through its new Private Entity Robocall and Spoofing Portal that a robocaller was placing spoofed calls using the company's business number. As a result, the company received multiple calls from confused consumers whom the robocaller had contacted about a grant program. Tracebacks revealed Solid Double as the originator of these calls.

CallWin apparently originated multiple illegal robocall campaigns on behalf of at least four clients. The Industry Traceback Group investigated prerecorded voice message calls that customers of Verizon Wireless flagged as illegal robocalls made without consent. The Bureau reviewed prerecorded calls that purported to be from "Pro American Solar" or "Medicare Department at Healthcare Benefits." These robocalls were originated by CallWin, were directed towards cellular phones, and apparently lacked the requisite consent of the called consumers. In response to evidence of the apparently unlawful nature of these calls, CallWin did not contest that it had originated the identified calls nor did it cite any exceptions to the FCC rules prohibiting such calls.

Consequences:

Originating providers can face serious consequences for allowing their customers to originate illegal calls on their networks. If the companies continue to support illegal robocalls, they could be removed from the Robocall Mitigation Database, which would require other providers to no longer accept their traffic. Further, if these companies fail to effectively mitigate the traffic within 48 hours or fail to implement effective measures to prevent new and renewing customers from using their networks to originate unlawful traffic within 14 days, downstream providers may begin blocking traffic from Solid Double and CallWin upon notice to the Commission.

How We Got Here:

Since March 2021, the FCC has been issuing <u>cease and desist letters</u> to companies suspected of originating and/or facilitating illegal robocall campaigns. These warnings have largely resulted in the targets ending their robocall activities. Where a warning was not enough, the FCC has moved quickly to block ongoing robocall campaigns. The FCC has prioritized addressing ongoing robocall campaigns to save consumers from the scams and the frustration of illegal calls.

Getting Results:

The <u>FCC's Robocall Response Team</u> serves as an FCC staff working group to combat the unyielding menace of illegal spoofed, or scam, robocalls.

- Blocking active robocall scam campaigns by issuing first-of-their-kind actions:
 - 99% drop in auto warranty scam robocalls after an FCC action;
 - 88% month-to-month drop in student loan scam robocalls;
 - Halted predatory mortgage robocalls targeting homeowners nationwide;
- Fining companies record-breaking amounts for illegal robocalls and spoofing;
- Closing gateways used by international robocallers to reach Americans' phones;
- Widespread implementation of STIR/SHAKEN caller ID authentication standards including applying the requirements to gateway providers;
- Working with industry to traceback illegal calls to their sources;
- Ensuring voice service providers meet FCC robocall mitigation requirements;
- Signing robocall investigation partnerships with <u>48</u> states, District of Columbia, Guam and international partners;
- Establishing first-of-their-kind regulations targeting scam text messaging; and
- Launching the Robocall Mitigation Database to monitor STIR/SHAKEN compliance.

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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).