

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Call Authentication Trust Anchor*, WC Docket No. 17-97.

According to one survey, 70% of Americans don't answer their phones if they don't recognize the number.¹ I'm among them. And that's for good reason, because the average American has received nearly 92 robocalls so far this year.² Illegal robocalls often used spoofed information—like a local area code or phone number of a trusted institution—to trick the recipient into thinking the call is from someone they might know.

In March, we took a critical step toward protecting consumers from these spoofed robocalls by requiring originating and terminating voice service providers to implement the STIR/SHAKEN caller ID authentication framework—a technology that enables providers to verify that the caller ID information transmitted with a phone call matches the caller's real number. Providers must implement STIR/SHAKEN in the IP portions of their networks by June 30, 2021, consistent with the TRACED Act.

Today, we take the next step in promoting caller ID authentication technology. We require providers to either upgrade their non-IP networks to IP and then implement STIR/SHAKEN by the June 30, 2021 deadline or develop a non-IP caller ID authentication solution. We obligate intermediate providers to implement STIR/SHAKEN in the IP portions of their networks by June 30, 2021 to ensure that a call will benefit from caller ID authentication regardless of how it travels through the network. For the non-IP portions of networks where STIR/SHAKEN cannot be enabled, we require voice service providers to implement a robocall mitigation program to ensure they are not the source of illegally spoofed robocalls. We also acknowledge the progress many companies have made in deploying STIR/SHAKEN, and as required by the TRACED Act, establish a process to exempt these providers from the deadline. And we grant an extension, as required by the TRACED Act, to providers that would face undue hardship in making necessary network upgrades to meet the June 30, 2021 deadline.

Today's Order is another key piece of our multi-pronged effort to fight spoofed robocalls. We continue to engage in swift and tough enforcement action, collaborate with the industry traceback group to identify those responsible for unlawful robocalls, partner with state governments and other federal agencies, and educate consumers to combat this problem. And there is evidence that we are making progress with these efforts. The Federal Trade Commission recently reported that the number of robocall complaints received in April and May was 60% lower than the same months last year,³ and the YouMail Robocall Index shows the number of robocalls in the United States declined by around 33% from the first to the second quarter of 2020.⁴ But while these trends are welcome, we recognize that our work to fight the scourge of illegal robocalls calls is far from done.

I'd like to thank the following Commission staff for their ongoing work to implement the TRACED Act and to protect Americans from spoofed robocalls: Pam Arluk, James Bachtell, Annick Banoun, Matt Collins, Justin Faulb, CJ Ferraro, Gabriela Gross, Kim Jackson, Dan Kahn, Jodie May, Rodney McDonald, Kris Monteith, Terri Natoli, Mason Shefa, and John Visclosky of the Wireline Competition Bureau; Ed Bartholme, Jennifer Burnett, Aaron Garza, Kurt Schroeder, Mark Stone, and Kristi Thornton of the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau; Kenneth Carlberg and Lauren

¹ Tim Harper, *Why Robocalls Are Even Worse Than You Thought* (May 15, 2019), <https://www.consumerreports.org/robocalls/why-robocalls-are-even-worse-than-you-thought/>.

² YouMail, *Robocall Index*, <https://robocallindex.com/history/time> (last visited Sept. 24, 2020).

³ *Id.*

⁴ Lois Greisman, *Robocall reports down, FTC still fighting* (June 15, 2020), <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2020/06/robocall-reports-still-down-ftc-still-fighting>.

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