STATEMENT OF
CHAIRWOMAN JESSICA ROSENWERCEL


Artificial Intelligence has become powerful enough to mimic human voices and create life-like images. Facing a rising tide of disinformation, roughly three-quarters of Americans say they are concerned about misleading AI-generated content. That is why the Federal Communications Commission has focused its work on AI by grounding it in a key principle of democracy—transparency.

Earlier this year, when a fraudulent campaign targeted voters in New Hampshire using AI-generated voice cloning to impersonate President Biden and tell them not to vote, we acted fast. We issued a Declaratory Ruling that made clear that “artificial or prerecorded voice” robocalls using AI voice cloning technology violate the Telephone Consumer Protection Act. In this effort we partnered with State Attorneys General, including the New Hampshire Attorney General, who is one of 49 State Attorneys General who have signed on to a Memorandum of Understanding to work with this agency on junk robocalls. This ruling matters. Because it gives our state colleagues the right to go after bad actors behind these calls and seek damages under the law. Then we worked with carriers to trace those responsible for this calling campaign. When we found the carrier behind it, we immediately sent a cease and desist letter and notified all other carriers to go ahead and stop carrying this traffic. We then took two enforcement actions. We proposed a $6 million fine for the party responsible for the scam calls and a proposed a $2 million fine for the carrier that put these junk calls on the line and apparently failed to follow the FCC’s call authentication rules.

Then last month, I wrote to the largest carriers and asked questions about what they were doing to keep AI-generated fake calls off our phone lines. They shared their plans to identify and block suspicious calls and the work they are doing to address the growing use of AI by scammers seeking to reach us on our phones. We have made their responses public on our website today.

These efforts—which are grounded in transparency—continued last week when the FCC took a major step to guard against AI being used by bad actors to spread chaos and confusion in our elections. We proposed that political advertisements that run on television and radio should simply disclose if AI is being used. I think if a campaign uses AI to create an ad, as the voter, viewer, and listener you have a right to know.

The concern about these technology developments is real. Rightfully so. But if we focus on transparency and taking swift action when we find fraud, I believe we can look beyond the risks of these technologies and harness the benefits.

Today we propose rules that would take another step towards transparency. We require callers and texters to make clear when they are using AI-generated technology. That means before any one of us gives our consent for calls from companies and campaigns they need to tell us if they are using this technology. It also means that callers using AI-generated voices need to disclose that at the start of a call.

This kind of transparency is important. It is also important to wrestle this technology for good. So today we also ask how people with speech or hearing disabilities might use AI-voice technologies. And we continue to ask questions about how we can harness the benefits of AI to detect scams on our networks before they ever reach us on our phones.

We have more work to do. But I am an optimist and I believe all of this is possible. I also believe this kind of transparency is what we need to build a digital future that works for everyone. So let’s get to it.

Thank you to the Robocall Response Team for their work. I also want to thank the staff responsible for this effort, including Mark Stone, Aaron Garza, Wesley Platt, Zac Champ, Richard Smith,
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