



April 2, 2019

The Honorable Roger F. Wicker, Chairman
The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: S. 151 (TRACED Act)

Dear Chairman Wicker and Ranking Member Cantwell:

Consumer Reports, the National Consumer Law Center on behalf of its low-income clients, Consumer Federation of America, and Consumer Action write in strong support of the Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence Act (TRACED Act).

FCC complaint data confirms that unwanted calls are a top consumer complaint.¹ It is long past time to require phone companies to employ effective technologies that can identify and stop unwanted robocalls before they reach the consumer.

The TRACED Act would take important steps toward this objective. It would direct the FCC to ensure that phone companies implement, by a date certain, the technology known as SHAKEN/STIR, which the companies have developed for verifying the accuracy of caller ID information. This would help address the problem of “spoofing,” in which robocallers, many of them scammers, input misleading information in the caller ID to trick consumers into picking up the phone.² The bill further directs the FCC to develop rules for when suspect calls may be blocked, and to consider rules for how to enable such blocking. After three years, the FCC would reassess the call authentication framework and could, if warranted, revise it to improve its effectiveness. The bill would also amend the Telephone Consumer Protection Act to strengthen the FCC’s ability to hold abusive robocallers accountable through stronger civil forfeiture authority for intentional violations.

¹ Fed. Comm’n Comm’n, Consumer Complaint Center, Unwanted Calls (last visited March 15, 2019), <https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov/hc/en-us/articles/115002234203-Unwanted-Calls>.

² *Id* at 8.

While more remains to be done to fully protect consumers against unwanted robocalls, this bill is an important step in that fight. We thank Senators Thune and Markey for their leadership and for working with us to strengthen protections for consumers against unwanted and abusive robocalls.

We look forward to working with you to see this important consumer protection legislation enacted into law.

Sincerely,

Maureen Mahoney, Policy Analyst
Consumer Reports

Margot Saunders, Senior Counsel
National Consumer Law Center

Susan Grant, Director of Consumer Protection and Privacy
Consumer Federation of America

Linda Sherry, Director of National Priorities
Consumer Action

cc: Members, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation