



PRESS RELEASE

Attorney General Frosh Urges the FCC to Help Law Enforcement Expose Illegal Robocallers

BALTIMORE, MD (June 4, 2020) – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh, along with the State Attorneys General Robocall Working Group, today [encouraged the Federal Communications Commission \(FCC\)](#) to facilitate continued collaboration among state attorneys general and telecom companies to coordinate tracing back illegal robocalls to their source.

Under the Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence (TRACED) Act, which became law in December 2019, the FCC will select a single registered association to manage the work to trace back illegal robocalls. Because a call can pass through the networks of many telecom companies before reaching its final destination, tracing that call—which is key to enforcing laws against illegal robocallers—requires collaboration among telecom companies and state attorneys general. In their comments, the states note that traceback investigations are necessary for law enforcement to more efficiently identify and investigate illegal robocallers and expose voice service providers that assist and facilitate illegal robocallers.

For the last few years, state attorneys general have encouraged the telecom industry to increase the number and speed of traceback investigations each month. Many telecom companies have joined this effort and are working hard to stop illegal robocallers. Traceback investigations are more urgent than ever because of coronavirus-related robocall scams, including scams related to coronavirus relief checks, pitches for coronavirus test kits, health plans offering coronavirus testing, work-from-home offers preying on job-seekers, and scams offering relief on utility bills, student loans, taxes, or other debt.

“Scammers are using the COVID-19 crisis to defraud, intimidate, or frighten people into giving them money or personal information, often utilizing illegal robocalls to find new victims,” said Attorney General Frosh. “The FCC must step up its efforts to protect consumers. Bringing together the telecom industry and law enforcement can make a difference in tracing those responsible for these robocalls.”

In 2019, Attorney General Frosh joined a bipartisan, public/private coalition of 51 attorneys general and 12 phone companies to create a joint doctrine of eight principles—including cooperation with law enforcement in traceback investigations—to help protect phone users from illegal robocalls and make it easier for attorneys general to investigate and prosecute lawbreakers.

Attorney General Frosh is joined in submitting today's comments by the attorneys general of Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.