



Attorney General Doug Peterson

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 22, 2015

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AG PETERSON CALLS ON PHONE CARRIERS TO OFFER CALL-BLOCKING TECHNOLOGY TO CUSTOMERS

July 22, 2015 – Attorney General Peterson today joined 44 other state attorneys general calling on five major phone companies to offer call-blocking technology to their customers. In a joint letter to the chief executives of the carriers, the attorneys general said a new Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rule clarification allows telecommunication service providers to offer customers the ability to block unwanted calls, and verifies that federal law does not prohibit offering the services.

In the letter to AT&T, Sprint, Verizon, T-Mobile, and CenturyLink, the attorneys general stated, “Every year, our offices are flooded with consumer complaints pleading for a solution to stop intrusive robocalls. Your companies are now poised to offer your customers the help they need. We urge you to act without delay.”

AG Peterson said phone carriers had previously claimed they could not offer such services. At a July 2013, hearing before a Senate subcommittee, representatives from the US Telecom Association and CTIA testified that “legal barriers prevent carriers from implementing advanced call-blocking technology to reduce the number of unwanted telemarketing calls.”

“The FCC has made it clear that phone companies can assist us in our fight against unwanted, annoying, and sometimes expensive calls,” Peterson said. “We will continue to press these phone carriers to give their customers what they have been asking for – a way to stop these calls before they ever come through.”

Peterson said call-blocking options already exist for Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone service (NoMoRobo.com) and Android cell phones (Call Control), and the phone carriers should move quickly to implement and inform their consumers of these options.

Last September, 39 attorneys general, led by Indiana Attorney General Greg Zoeller and Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster, called on the FCC to allow phone companies to utilize call-blocking technologies. The FCC chairman endorsed the request in late May and the FCC voted to pass the rule clarification on June 18.

The attorneys general offices that signed today’s letter are: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

[Letter attached hereto]



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South Dakota Attorney General

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Connecticut Attorney General

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July 22, 2015

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Verizon Communications
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St. Petersburg, FL 33733

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100 CenturyLink Drive
Monroe, LA 71203

Marcelo Claire
Chief Executive Officer
Sprint Corporation
6200 Sprint Parkway
Overland Park, KS 66251

John Legere
President and Chief Executive
Officer
T-Mobile USA
12920 SE 38th Street
Bellevue, WA 98006

Dear Mssrs. Stephenson, McAdam, Claire, Legere and Post:

As state Attorneys General, we are on the front lines of consumer protection for millions of Americans harassed by unwanted and unwelcome robocalls. Though our offices work diligently to prosecute those who violate state and federal laws intended to prevent such calls, our enforcement efforts alone cannot stop the problem. The better solution is to stop intrusive calls before they ever reach the consumer. To that end, we call on you to take full advantage of the opportunity provided by the rule clarification recently adopted by the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") and offer call-blocking technology to your consumers.

Previous discussions regarding the implementation of call-blocking technologies were cut short by concerns that such technology may violate federal law. At a July 2013 hearing before a Senate subcommittee, for example, representatives from the US Telecom Association and CTIA testified that "legal barriers prevent[] carriers from implementing advanced call-blocking technology to reduce the number of unwanted telemarketing calls."

In response to that concern, thirty-nine Attorneys General sent a letter to the FCC last September asking the Commission to issue an official opinion clarifying that telephone providers are not prohibited by law from offering, at the customer's request, technology to block unwanted calls or texts.

On June 18, 2015, the FCC responded, formally adopting a rule clarification, clearly stating that federal law does not prohibit telecommunication service providers from offering, upon a customer's

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request, services intended to block unwanted calls. This clarification by the FCC should remove any doubt about your legal authority to empower consumers by providing call-blocking technology to help stop robocalls, scam text messages and unwanted telemarketing calls.

Since call-blocking options already exist for Voice over Internet Protocol or VoIP phone service (NoMoRobo.com) and Android cell phones (Call Control), landline and wireless carriers should move swiftly to implement and inform consumers of these options.

Every year, our offices are flooded with consumer complaints pleading for a solution to stop intrusive robocalls. Your organizations are now poised to offer your customers the help they need. We urge you to act without delay.

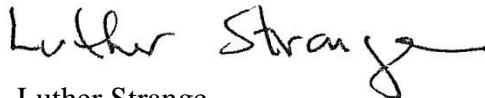
Respectfully,



Greg Zoeller
Indiana Attorney General



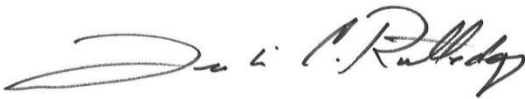
Chris Koster
Missouri Attorney General



Luther Strange
Alabama Attorney General



Craig W. Richards
Alaska Attorney General



Leslie Rutledge
Arkansas Attorney General



Kamala Harris
California Attorney General



Cynthia Coffman
Colorado Attorney General



George Jepsen
Connecticut Attorney General



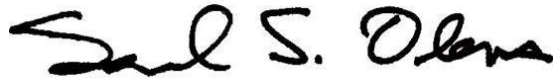
Matthew Denn
Delaware Attorney General



Karl A. Racine
District of Columbia Attorney General



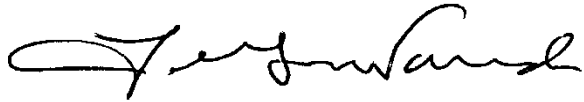
Pam Bondi
Florida Attorney General




Sam Olens
Georgia Attorney General



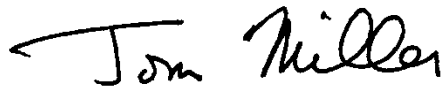
Doug Chin
Hawaii Attorney General



Lawrence Wasden
Idaho Attorney General



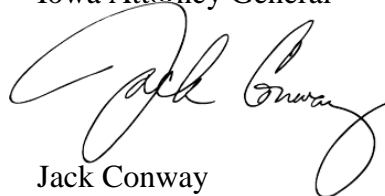
Lisa Madigan
Illinois Attorney General



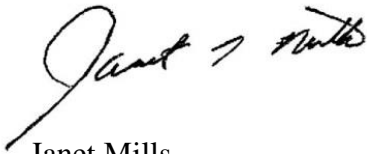
Tom Miller
Iowa Attorney General



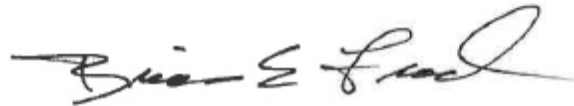
Derek Schmidt
Kansas Attorney General



Jack Conway
Kentucky Attorney General



Janet Mills
Maine Attorney General



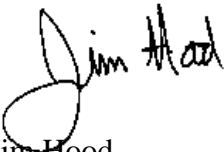
Brian Frosh
Maryland Attorney General



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Michigan Attorney General



Lori Swanson
Minnesota Attorney General



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Montana Attorney General



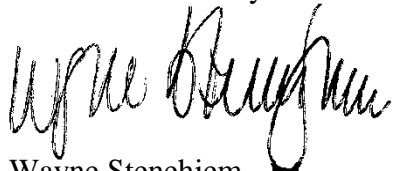
Doug Peterson
Nebraska Attorney General



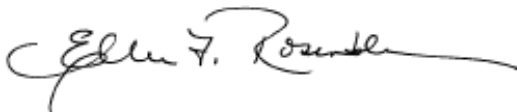
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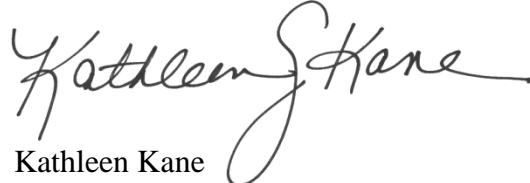
Hector Balderas
New Mexico Attorney General



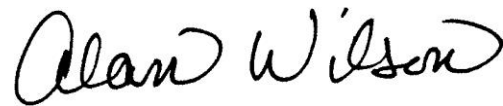
Roy Cooper
North Carolina Attorney General



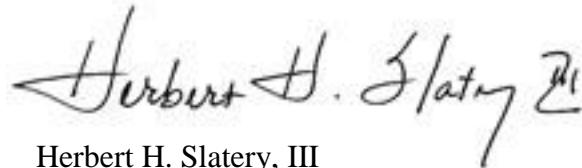
Mike DeWine
Ohio Attorney General



Kathleen Kane
Pennsylvania Attorney General



Alan Wilson
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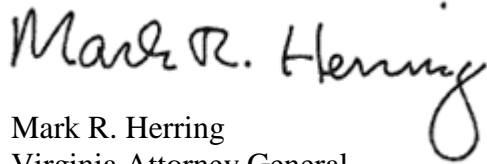
Herbert H. Slatery, III
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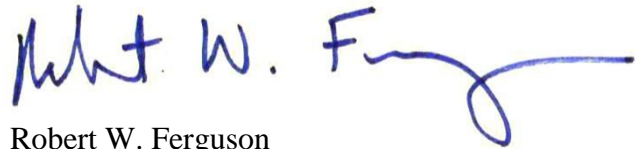
Sean Reyes
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