

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MIGNON L. CLYBURN**

Re: *In the Matter of Adrian Abramovich, Marketing Strategy Leaders, Inc., and Marketing Leaders, Inc.*, File No. EB-TCD-15-00020488

Anyone who has ever contacted the FCC's Washington, DC headquarters is familiar with these six digits: 202-418. Given this association, if that area code and prefix appeared on your caller ID, you would more than likely answer the call (at least I like to think you would). But when phone numbers are spoofed and what appears to be a trusted or familiar source actually originates from a party intent on misleading, defrauding, causing harm, or wrongfully obtaining something of value, we each have a serious and potentially dangerous problem on our hands.

Unwanted robocalls are universally hated. Too often, they disrupt some of our most precious, and increasingly rare moments of peace and quiet. And to say that the case before us, is one of the most troubling that I have ever seen in this context, is one of the biggest understatements I have made in years. One man, a single individual, is apparently responsible for nearly 100 million robocalls during a three month period. Adrian Abramovich's alleged spoofing activities, has had a direct and adverse financial impact on consumers, the reputational harm of respected American businesses and if that were not enough, has been a serious threat to public safety.

During the FCC Enforcement Bureau's review of these apparent spoofed telephone calls, it was discovered that some consumers paid hundreds of dollars for vacations that differed significantly from the ones presented to them. This has caused incalculable harm to well-regarded American travel companies, as their names were misappropriated and their hard-earned reputations were maligned as consumers were misled presumably for financial gain. Mr. Abramovich's apparent robocall spoofing scheme also disrupted an emergency medical paging service designed to ensure that first responders receive immediate critical alerts.

I wish that I could promise the American people that today's action will put an end to all unwanted and as this case makes apparent, dangerous robocalls. Sadly, this Notice of Apparent Liability addresses only a fraction of the approximately 2.6 billion robocalls that YouMail's Robocall Index reports were made just during the month of May. But there is one thing that I know on which we all agree: If there is any case of where a first impression should be lasting, it is this one. I wholeheartedly support being as tough as we can justify, on anyone who would violate the public's trust, intentionally violate the Commission's rules, and put people at risk for apparent personal gain. And a proposed penalty of \$120 million, the largest in the FCC's history, shows just how serious we are in stamping out the largest spoofed robocall campaign we have yet to investigate.

The Commission has an obligation to ensure that all of its rules are robustly enforced, including those that protect consumers against 9-1-1 outages, cramming, slamming, and other core consumer protections. A Commission that is truly committed to putting #ConsumersFirst, must never issue a hall pass to any communications provider that egregiously violates the Truth in Caller ID Act or any of our standing rules.

The American people are counting on us to be the voice that stands against practices that harm competition and limit consumer choice. We have much more work to do when it comes to these goals, but today it pleases me to say, we have taken a noteworthy step.

My thanks to the Enforcement Bureau staff for your extensive work on this item and for your continued efforts to address the Commission's number one consumer complaint: illegal robocalls.