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**FCC CHAIRMAN APPLAUDS 25 YEARS OF  
CONSUMER ROBOCALL & TELEMARKETING PROTECTIONS**  
*Telephone Consumer Protection Action Empowers and Protects Consumers*

WASHINGTON, December 21, 2016 – Federal Communications Commission Chairman Tom Wheeler today expressed his strong support for the consumer protections provided by the Telephone Consumer Protection Act. Twenty-five years ago this week, President George H.W. Bush signed this landmark legislation into law, providing American consumers with rights to determine the calls they receive and those they do not.

“Consumers want and deserve control over the calls and texts they receive. The TCPA remains the best legal tool we have to protect and empower consumers,” said Chairman Wheeler. “With strong rules, vigilant enforcement and support for new tools like robocall blocking, the FCC plays a vital role in ensuring that this law protects and empowers consumers as it was intended.”

The TCPA authorizes the FCC to establish strong rules against telemarketing and other unwanted robocalls that can be intrusive and at times harmful. Under the law, consumers have strong protections against telemarketing calls to landline phones – such as the Do Not Call registry – and broad protections against robocalls to mobile phones. The Commission has also [made clear](#) that consumers have the same protections against robotext messages that they have for robocalls.

In recent years, the Commission has renewed its commitment to a strong, pro-consumer reading of the Telephone Consumer Protection Act as it has become cheaper than ever to bombard consumers with unwanted calls and texts. The FCC has closed loopholes that would allow more unwanted calls to reach consumers. As unwanted calls – including telemarketing and robocalls – remain the number-one consumer complaint to the agency, the FCC has made sure that consumers have all the rights possible to control the calls they receive.

In its 2015 [ruling](#), the Commission reiterated the Act’s definition of an “autodialer” as any technology with the *capacity* to dial random or sequential numbers, thus ensuring new technology is not used to work around the law’s consumer protections. The FCC also made clear that a phone number being reassigned does not open up a loophole for unwanted robocalls and that consumers have the right to revoke their permission to be robocalled.

In addition, the Commission has provided limited, common sense exceptions to the rules. For example, utility companies can contact their own customers about possible power outages. Schools can contact parents if a student does not show up at school. Your bank can contact you about possible fraud on your account. And emergency communications are always

exempted.

To read more about consumers' robocall rights, visit <https://www.fcc.gov/robocalls>

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*This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).*