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For Immediate Release

FCC ISSUES \$120 MILLION FINE FOR SPOOFED ROBOCALLS

Agency Concludes Investigation into Adrian Abramovich’s Massive ‘Neighbor Spoofing’ Telemarketing Operation with Largest FCC Forfeiture Ever

WASHINGTON, May 10, 2018—The Federal Communications Commission today fined Adrian Abramovich \$120 million for malicious spoofing that was part of his massive robocalling operation aimed at selling timeshares and other travel packages. The caller ID spoofing operation made almost 100 million spoofed robocalls over three months. The Truth in Caller ID Act prohibits callers from deliberately falsifying caller ID information with the intent to harm or defraud consumers or unlawfully obtain something of value.

The FCC proposed this fine in the summer of 2017. In response to the proposed fine, Mr. Abramovich claimed that he had no intent to cause harm, and that the proposed forfeiture amount was unconstitutional. The Commission determined that the evidence did not support these claims and is imposing a fine in the amount originally proposed, the largest forfeiture ever imposed by the agency.

Mr. Abramovich, of Miami, Florida, or companies he controlled, spoofed 96 million robocalls in order to trick unsuspecting consumers into answering and listening to his advertising messages. To increase the likelihood that consumers would answer his calls, Mr. Abramovich’s operation made calls that appeared to be local—a practice known as “neighbor spoofing.” The messages indicated that the calls came from well-known travel or hospitality companies such as Marriott, Expedia, Hilton, and TripAdvisor, and prompted consumers to “Press 1” to hear about “exclusive” vacation deals. Those who did were transferred to foreign call centers where live operators attempted to sell vacation packages—often involving timeshares—at destinations unrelated to the named travel or hospitality companies.

The Commission received numerous consumer complaints about these calls. In addition, the Commission heard from companies such as TripAdvisor, which received complaints from consumers who believed the robocalls had come from the company. Medical paging provider Spōk also complained after its network was disrupted by these calls, thus interfering with hospital and physician communications. Both companies actively helped the investigation.

Consumer complaints about neighbor spoofing have more than doubled in the first few months of this year. The Commission recently [warned](#) consumers of this deceptive practice, providing tips to help consumers.

Action by the Commission May 10, 2018 by Forfeiture Order (FCC 18-58). Chairman Pai, Commissioners Carr and Rosenworcel approving. Commissioner O’Rielly approving in part

and dissenting in part. Commissioner Clyburn not participating. Chairman Pai, Commissioners O’Rielly, Carr and Rosenworcel issuing separate statements

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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).

