

Public Law 111–331
111th Congress

An Act

Dec. 22, 2010
[S. 30]

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to prohibit manipulation of caller identification information.

Truth in Caller
ID Act of 2009.
47 USC 609 note.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Truth in Caller ID Act of 2009”.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION REGARDING MANIPULATION OF CALLER IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION.

Section 227 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (e), (f), and (g) as subsections (f), (g), and (h), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (d) the following new subsection:

“(e) PROHIBITION ON PROVISION OF INACCURATE CALLER IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—It shall be unlawful for any person within the United States, in connection with any telecommunications service or IP-enabled voice service, to cause any caller identification service to knowingly transmit misleading or inaccurate caller identification information with the intent to defraud, cause harm, or wrongfully obtain anything of value, unless such transmission is exempted pursuant to paragraph (3)(B).

“(2) PROTECTION FOR BLOCKING CALLER IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to prevent or restrict any person from blocking the capability of any caller identification service to transmit caller identification information.

“(3) REGULATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of the Truth in Caller ID Act of 2009, the Commission shall prescribe regulations to implement this subsection.

“(B) CONTENT OF REGULATIONS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The regulations required under subparagraph (A) shall include such exemptions from the prohibition under paragraph (1) as the Commission determines is appropriate.

“(ii) SPECIFIC EXEMPTION FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES OR COURT ORDERS.—The regulations required

Deadline.

under subparagraph (A) shall exempt from the prohibition under paragraph (1) transmissions in connection with—

“(I) any authorized activity of a law enforcement agency; or

“(II) a court order that specifically authorizes the use of caller identification manipulation.

“(4) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the enactment of the Truth in Caller ID Act of 2009, the Commission shall report to Congress whether additional legislation is necessary to prohibit the provision of inaccurate caller identification information in technologies that are successor or replacement technologies to telecommunications service or IP-enabled voice service.

“(5) PENALTIES.—

“(A) CIVIL FORFEITURE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Any person that is determined by the Commission, in accordance with paragraphs (3) and (4) of section 503(b), to have violated this subsection shall be liable to the United States for a forfeiture penalty. A forfeiture penalty under this paragraph shall be in addition to any other penalty provided for by this Act. The amount of the forfeiture penalty determined under this paragraph shall not exceed \$10,000 for each violation, or 3 times that amount for each day of a continuing violation, except that the amount assessed for any continuing violation shall not exceed a total of \$1,000,000 for any single act or failure to act.

“(ii) RECOVERY.—Any forfeiture penalty determined under clause (i) shall be recoverable pursuant to section 504(a).

“(iii) PROCEDURE.—No forfeiture liability shall be determined under clause (i) against any person unless such person receives the notice required by section 503(b)(3) or section 503(b)(4).

“(iv) 2-YEAR STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.—No forfeiture penalty shall be determined or imposed against any person under clause (i) if the violation charged occurred more than 2 years prior to the date of issuance of the required notice or notice of apparent liability.

“(B) CRIMINAL FINE.—Any person who willfully and knowingly violates this subsection shall upon conviction thereof be fined not more than \$10,000 for each violation, or 3 times that amount for each day of a continuing violation, in lieu of the fine provided by section 501 for such a violation. This subparagraph does not supersede the provisions of section 501 relating to imprisonment or the imposition of a penalty of both fine and imprisonment.

“(6) ENFORCEMENT BY STATES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The chief legal officer of a State, or any other State officer authorized by law to bring actions on behalf of the residents of a State, may bring a civil action, as *parens patriae*, on behalf of the residents of that State in an appropriate district court of the United States to enforce this subsection or to impose the civil penalties for violation of this subsection, whenever the

chief legal officer or other State officer has reason to believe that the interests of the residents of the State have been or are being threatened or adversely affected by a violation of this subsection or a regulation under this subsection.

“(B) NOTICE.—The chief legal officer or other State officer shall serve written notice on the Commission of any civil action under subparagraph (A) prior to initiating such civil action. The notice shall include a copy of the complaint to be filed to initiate such civil action, except that if it is not feasible for the State to provide such prior notice, the State shall provide such notice immediately upon instituting such civil action.

“(C) AUTHORITY TO INTERVENE.—Upon receiving the notice required by subparagraph (B), the Commission shall have the right—

“(i) to intervene in the action;

“(ii) upon so intervening, to be heard on all matters arising therein; and

“(iii) to file petitions for appeal.

“(D) CONSTRUCTION.—For purposes of bringing any civil action under subparagraph (A), nothing in this paragraph shall prevent the chief legal officer or other State officer from exercising the powers conferred on that officer by the laws of such State to conduct investigations or to administer oaths or affirmations or to compel the attendance of witnesses or the production of documentary and other evidence.

“(E) VENUE; SERVICE OR PROCESS.—

“(i) VENUE.—An action brought under subparagraph (A) shall be brought in a district court of the United States that meets applicable requirements relating to venue under section 1391 of title 28, United States Code.

“(ii) SERVICE OF PROCESS.—In an action brought under subparagraph (A)—

“(I) process may be served without regard to the territorial limits of the district or of the State in which the action is instituted; and

“(II) a person who participated in an alleged violation that is being litigated in the civil action may be joined in the civil action without regard to the residence of the person.

“(7) EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.—This subsection does not prohibit any lawfully authorized investigative, protective, or intelligence activity of a law enforcement agency of the United States, a State, or a political subdivision of a State, or of an intelligence agency of the United States.

“(8) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection:

“(A) CALLER IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION.—The term ‘caller identification information’ means information provided by a caller identification service regarding the telephone number of, or other information regarding the origination of, a call made using a telecommunications service or IP-enabled voice service.

“(B) CALLER IDENTIFICATION SERVICE.—The term ‘caller identification service’ means any service or device designed

to provide the user of the service or device with the telephone number of, or other information regarding the origination of, a call made using a telecommunications service or IP-enabled voice service. Such term includes automatic number identification services.

“(C) IP-ENABLED VOICE SERVICE.—The term ‘IP-enabled voice service’ has the meaning given that term by section 9.3 of the Commission’s regulations (47 C.F.R. 9.3), as those regulations may be amended by the Commission from time to time.

“(9) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, subsection (f) shall not apply to this subsection or to the regulations under this subsection.”.

Approved December 22, 2010.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 30 (H.R. 1258):

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 111-461 (Comm. on Energy and Commerce) accompanying H.R. 1258.

SENATE REPORTS: No. 111-96 (Comm. on Commerce, Science, and Transportation).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 156 (2010):

Feb. 23, considered and passed Senate.

Dec. 15, considered and passed House.