

April 29, 2019

The Honorable Mike Doyle
306 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bob Latta
2467 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Doyle and Republican Leader Latta:

The undersigned are competitive providers of interconnected VoIP and other voice services. We write today to thank the subcommittee for considering the Support Tools to Obliterate Pesky Robocalls (“STOP Robocalls”) Act discussion draft, which includes a provision affirming that voice providers may offer free robocall blocking tools to new or existing customers on an informed opt-out basis. This provision would empower providers like us do more to shield our customers from the ceaseless torrent of robocalls.

There are effective tools available today that block robocalls before they reach the customer. We provide such tools to our customers on an opt-in basis at no cost. However, in our experience, notwithstanding our efforts to inform our customers of the significant benefits of these tools, relatively few customers take the affirmative step of signing up for them. These low opt-in rates persist in spite of consumers’ growing frustration with robocalls. And the feedback we’ve received from “early adopters” of robocall blocking tools has been overwhelmingly positive, which makes it unfortunate that customers who are less familiar with and slower to adopt new technologies are missing out.

We could help more of our customers enjoy the benefits of free robocall blocking if we offered these tools on an informed opt-out basis, as the STOP Robocalls Act would allow us to do. Given the popularity of these tools among customers that use them, we anticipate that opt-out rates would be low—and thus, many more of our customers would receive the benefit of these tools than do today. The result would be a significant net improvement in our customers’ user experience. And the more widely our customers use these tools, the better these tools can help us differentiate our voice offerings in today’s highly competitive marketplace.

Every day, our customers are bombarded with robocalls. We want to do more to help them protect themselves from this onslaught, and the “opt-out” provision of the STOP Robocalls Act discussion draft will enable us to do just that. We encourage the subcommittee to give this provision its fullest consideration.

Respectfully,

_____/s/_____
Jonathan Bullock
VP, Corporate Development and Government
Hotwire Communications

_____/s/_____
Michael Candelaria
General Manager/CEO
Mid-Rivers Communications

_____/s/_____
Joe Canavan
Chief Operating Officer
Blue Stream

_____/s/_____
Katherine Gessner
President
MCTV

_____/s/_____
Lee Haefele
President
Haefele Connect

_____/s/_____
Tara Kelley
SVP, White Label
Momentum Telecom

_____/s/_____
Travis Kohlrus
VP, Broadband
Eagle Communications, Inc.

_____/s/_____
Robert M. Wieand
Chief Financial Officer
Service Electric Cablevision

cc: Members of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology