

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5985

To direct the Federal Communications Commission to establish an interagency taskforce on unlawful robocalls.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 27, 2020

Mr. BUDD (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina, and Mr. CLAY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To direct the Federal Communications Commission to establish an interagency taskforce on unlawful robocalls.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Foreign Robocall
5 Elimination Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. INTERAGENCY TASKFORCE ON UNLAWFUL**
7 **ROBOCALLS.**

8 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after
9 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Commu-
10 nications Commission, in consultation with the Federal

1 Trade Commission and the Attorney General, shall estab-
2 lish an interagency taskforce on unlawful robocalls.

3 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The taskforce shall be com-
5 posed of the following members:

6 (A) A representative of each Federal agen-
7 cy that the Federal Communications Commis-
8 sion, in consultation with the Federal Trade
9 Commission and the Attorney General, con-
10 siders appropriate, to be appointed by the head
11 of such agency.

12 (B) Three representatives of private-sector
13 entities, to be appointed as described in para-
14 graph (2)—

15 (i) one of whom is a representative of
16 a provider of telephone service; and

17 (ii) two of whom are representatives
18 of other private-sector entities with exper-
19 tise in combating unlawful robocalls and
20 who may be technologists and technology
21 experts.

22 (2) APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
23 PRIVATE-SECTOR ENTITIES.—The members of the
24 taskforce described in paragraph (1)(B) shall be
25 jointly appointed by the Chairman of the Federal

1 Communications Commission, the Chairman of the
2 Federal Trade Commission, and the Attorney Gen-
3 eral. If the Chairman of the Federal Communica-
4 tions Commission, the Chairman of the Federal
5 Trade Commission, and the Attorney General cannot
6 reach agreement regarding such an appointment, as
7 determined by the Chairman of the Federal Commu-
8 nications Commission, the Chairman of the Federal
9 Communications Commission shall make such ap-
10 pointment.

11 (c) STUDY.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—The taskforce shall conduct
13 a study on unlawful robocalls, including the most ef-
14 fective ways to combat unlawful robocalls made into
15 the United States from outside the United States.

16 (2) MATTERS TO BE STUDIED.—In conducting
17 the study required by paragraph (1), the taskforce
18 shall—

19 (A) compare the number of unlawful
20 robocalls made within the United States and
21 the number of unlawful robocalls made into the
22 United States from outside the United States;

23 (B) examine methods for encouraging
24 adoption of caller authentication technology in
25 foreign countries;

1 (C) examine and provide information on
2 options for countries to share caller authentica-
3 tion information for international calls;

4 (D) examine how technical solutions such
5 as caller authentication technology would im-
6 prove coordination between the United States
7 and foreign countries in combating unlawful
8 robocalls;

9 (E) examine ways to incentivize foreign
10 countries to cooperate with United States law
11 enforcement efforts to combat unlawful robo-
12 calls;

13 (F) examine ways to incentivize providers
14 of telephone service to take measures to combat
15 unlawful robocalls placed across international
16 borders; and

17 (G) examine whether or not additional re-
18 sources are needed by any Federal agency that
19 combats unlawful robocalls or any other organi-
20 zation that combats unlawful robocalls, in order
21 to more effectively combat unlawful robocalls
22 made into the United States from outside the
23 United States.

24 (3) COLLABORATION WITH PRIVATE SECTOR.—

25 In conducting the study required by paragraph (1),

1 the taskforce shall collaborate with technologists and
2 private-sector innovators, including through the
3 members of the taskforce appointed under sub-
4 section (b)(2), to find solutions for combating unlaw-
5 ful robocalls.

6 (d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 10
7 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
8 taskforce shall submit to Congress a report on the findings
9 of the study required by subsection (c)(1).

10 (e) TERMINATION.—The taskforce shall terminate on
11 the date that is 90 days after the taskforce submits the
12 report required by subsection (d).

13 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

14 (1) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term “Federal
15 agency” has the meaning given the term “agency”
16 in section 551 of title 5, United States Code.

17 (2) STATE.—The term “State” means each
18 State of the United States, the District of Columbia,
19 each commonwealth, territory, or possession of the
20 United States, and each federally recognized Indian
21 Tribe.

22 (3) TASKFORCE.—The term “taskforce” means
23 the taskforce on unlawful robocalls established under
24 subsection (a).

1 (4) UNLAWFUL ROBOCALL.—The term “unlaw-
2 ful robocall” means a telephone call made in viola-
3 tion of—

4 (A) section 227(b) of the Communications
5 Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227(b)); or

6 (B) a similar law of a State or a foreign
7 country that prohibits calls made using an
8 automatic telephone dialing system or an artifi-
9 cial or prerecorded voice.

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