

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
JANUARY 26, 2015

Contacts: (NCLC): Margot Saunders,
msaunders@nclc.org 202.595.7844 ext. 104 or
Jan Kruse, jkruse@nclc.org , 617.542.8010
(NACA): Ellen Taverna, ellen@consumeradvocates.org,
202.452.1989 ext. 109

DOWNLOAD the group letter: <http://bit.ly/1523poG>

FCC Poised to Open the Floodgates for Robocalls to Cell Phones

: 2 national and state civil rights, community, and consumer groups urge the FCC to keep key protections

(WASHINGTON) Today, more than : 2 national and state civil rights, community, and consumer groups sent a letter to the FCC urging the commission to keep important consumer and privacy protections for cell phone users. The American Bankers Association, the American Collectors Association, Consumer Bankers Association, and other industry groups, are pushing the FCC to gut the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA). Congress passed the TCPA more than two decades ago and it protects consumers from receiving annoying robocalls to cell phones, calls which invade privacy and disrupt lives. “We hope that the FCC will resist the pressure from business and industry trade groups to weaken rules that prevent robocalls to cell phones without consent,” said Margot Saunders, counsel to the National Consumer Law Center. “Currently, robocalls (or texts) to cell phones are illegal unless the cell phone owner has provided consent. Repeated unauthorized calls and texts to consumers’ cell phones invade privacy and cost money by using their precious minutes or limited text allowances.”

The debt collection and banking industries want the FCC to allow “wrong party” robocalls to cell phones, which could subject innocent bystanders to intrusive calls and texts if the caller obtains a number previously owned by someone else or if a debt collector associates a number with the wrong person.

Companies can and should use technology to determine whether cell phone numbers were transferred to new users. Instead, they want the right to continue robocalling wrong numbers. National Association of Consumer Advocates Legislative Director Ellen Taverna added, “Maintaining strong protections against these calls creates incentives for the industry to develop methods to avoid harassing people who have not agreed to be called on their cell phones.”

###

Since 1969, the nonprofit **National Consumer Law Center**[®] (NCLC[®]) has worked for consumer justice and economic security for low-income and other disadvantaged people, including older adults, in the U.S. through its expertise in policy analysis and advocacy, publications, litigation, expert witness services, and training. www.nclc.org

The National Association of Consumer Advocates (NACA) is a nonprofit association of more than 1,500 consumer advocates and attorney members who represent hundreds of thousands of consumers victimized by fraudulent, abusive and predatory business practices. As an organization fully committed to promoting justice for consumers, NACA’s members and their clients are actively engaged in promoting a fair and open marketplace that forcefully protects the rights of consumers, particularly those of modest means. www.consumeradvocates.org