

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 6, 2020

The Honorable William Barr
Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Barr:

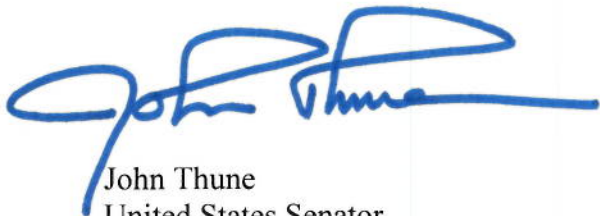
Implementation of our recently enacted Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence (TRACED) Act is critical to help reduce the billions of illegal and abusive robocalls received by Americans each year. We believe a credible threat of criminal prosecution is necessary and appropriate for those who knowingly flout laws to prey upon our most vulnerable populations, like the elderly. Therefore, your duties required by the TRACED Act are imperative to the success of the law and the deterrence of illegal robocalls, and we urge you to swiftly and forcefully begin implementation of your new statutory obligations to stop this plague on American consumers.

As you know, the TRACED Act directs you, in consultation with Chairman Pai at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), to convene an interagency working group to study the prosecution of violations of Section 227(b) of the Communications Act of 1934. Among other things, the interagency working group is required to examine existing and potential international policies and programs to deter robocalls since many illegal robocallers are based in foreign countries.

Although Congress has provided the FCC with the authority to go after foreign caller-ID spoofers, in order to have effective enforcement of anti-robocall regulations against bad actors based abroad, the FCC needs cooperation from foreign governments. To that end, the TRACED Act specifically requires the inclusion of representatives from the Department of State to help aid in addressing those needs.

The interagency working group, under your direction, has enormous potential to help with the deterrence of illegal and abusive robocalls at home and abroad. We encourage you to devote all necessary resources to vigorously carry out your duties required by the TRACED Act and look forward to reviewing your recommendations on the prevention and prosecution of illegal robocalls.

Sincerely,



John Thune
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Cc: The Honorable Ajit V. Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission