

Governor Phil Murphy

ICYMI: Attorney General Platkin Joins Multistate Complaint Against Avid Telecom Over Illegal Robocalls

05/23/2023

NEWARK—Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin today joined a multistate lawsuit against Michael D. Lansky, LLC, which does business under the name Avid Telecom, its owner Michael Lansky, and its vice president Stacey S. Reeves, for allegedly initiating and facilitating billions of illegal robocalls to millions of people and violating the Telephone Consumer Protection Act, the Telemarketing Sales Rule, and other federal and state telemarketing and consumer laws. Avid Telecom sent or transmitted more than 7.5 billion calls to telephone numbers on the National Do Not Call Registry between December 2018 and January 2023—more than 237 million of those calls were to numbers in New Jersey.

“Everyone has experienced robocalls and nobody likes them,” said **Attorney General Platkin**. “Through this complaint, we are cracking down on billions of scam calls and stopping them from continuing to bother our residents.”

Avid Telecom is a Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) service provider that sells data, phone numbers, dialing software, and/or expertise to help its customers make mass robocalls. It also serves as an intermediate provider and allegedly facilitated or helped route illegal robocalls across the country. Between December 2018 and January 2023, Avid sent or attempted to transmit more than 24.5 billion calls. More than 90 percent of those calls lasted less than just 15 seconds, which indicates they were likely robocalls. Further, Avid helped make hundreds of millions of calls using spoofed or invalid caller ID numbers, including more than 8.4 million calls that appeared to be coming from government and law enforcement agencies, as well as private companies.

Avid Telecom allegedly sent or transmitted scam calls about Social Security Administration scams, Medicare scams, auto warranty scams, Amazon scams, DirecTV scams, credit card interest rate reduction scams, and employment scams. Examples of some of these scam calls are available to listen to here (https://urldefense.com/v3/https://t.e2ma.net/click/by6ijj/7ys5259b/ruyaa4_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!L0P7TFNEIXcHFsvHV5RAL8t_w27gsFRL1EsFIXqKW5R8bjOqh5FGBQDjqnT5JT1GsOLNcON31a\$) and here (https://urldefense.com/v3/https://t.e2ma.net/click/by6ijj/7ys5259b/7mzaa4_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!L0P7TFNEIXcHFsvHV5RAL8t_w27gsFRL1EsFIXqKW5R8bjOqh5FGBQDjqnT5JT1GsOLMu5zfXv\$).

“Unsolicited robocalls are not only annoying, but they also are tools that scammers use to commit fraud,” said **Cari Fais, Acting Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs**. “Joining this complaint shows our commitment to protecting New Jersey residents from unwanted calls and scams.”

The USTelecom-led Industry Traceback Group, which notifies providers about known and suspected illegal robocalls sent across their networks, sent at least 329 notifications to Avid Telecom that it was transmitting these calls, but Avid Telecom continued to do so.

Today’s legal action arises from the nationwide Anti-Robocall Multistate Litigation Task Force of 51 bipartisan attorneys general. The task force is investigating and taking legal action against those responsible for routing significant volumes of illegal robocall traffic into and across the United States. The Federal Trade Commission and the Social Security Administration’s Office of the Inspector General provided investigative assistance in this matter.

Attorney General Platkin is joined in filing today’s complaint by the Attorneys General of Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, D.C., Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

The State is represented by Deputy Attorneys General Deepta Janardhan and Jeff Koziar of the Consumer Fraud Prosecution Section in the Division of Law’s Affirmative Civil Enforcement Practice Group, under the supervision of Assistant Section Chief Jesse J. Sierant, Assistant Attorney General Jennifer S. Schiefelbein, Deputy Director Jason W. Rockwell, and Director Michael T.G. Long.

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