

**Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
**Opening Statement**  
**of**  
**Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection Member Debbie Dingell**

***Do Not Call: Combating Robocalls and Caller ID Spoofing***

**April 27, 2018**

Thank you, Chairman Latta, for holding today's hearing on robocalls and spoofing. Robocalls are great annoyance for American families, especially American seniors. One-third of calls are now unwanted robocalls. Just in March, a record 3 billion robocalls were placed to American consumers - about a quarter of these calls are scam calls.

I hear repeatedly from my constituents that they want these calls to stop.

One constituent in Ann Arbor wrote:

"My land line and cell numbers are both on the federal do not call registry. I checked. I am so angry about all the calls from off shore call banks telling me that my computer is broken, or that I need help with medical insurance and my college loans. Exactly what does the do not call list do? Not answering and letting someone call back isn't an option as I have an elderly parent who does call. I'm also not wanting to go to the expense of updating my phone system to get caller id."

There were many more just like this, and to no one's surprise, there wasn't one letter in support of robocalls.

To everyone who has reached out to me about this, I want you to know that Democrats on the Energy and Commerce Committee have heard you, and we're taking action.

This week, Democrats are introducing three bills to help stop robocalls.

Ranking Member Pallone introduced the Stopping Bad Robocalls Act, which would strengthen the Telephone Consumer Protection Act and help the FCC take action against robocallers.

Congresswoman Eshoo introduced the HANGUP Act, which would require debt collectors contracted with the federal government to get consumers' permission before robocalling or autodialing consumers.

And last, but certainly not least, today I've released a discussion draft titled the CEASE Robocalls Act. This draft legislation would lift the common carrier exemption in the Federal Trade Commission Act so that the FTC can take action against these smaller Voice over Internet

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Protocol services that are a huge player and heavily involved in illegal robocalls. I'm looking forward to getting feedback from all the witnesses here today about this discussion draft.

Today, we'll hear from witnesses about some of the exciting and promising tools available to consumers wishing to block robocalls. But consumers don't just need new tools - they need new protections. We've put forward commonsense ideas to stop Americans from being harassed by unwanted calls.

I hope we can all work to move this legislation forward and make progress on this issue, because I'm growing tired of leaving my phone on silent.

Thank you, Chairman Latta. I yield back.