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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEBSITE: <http://commerce.senate.gov>

July 14, 2016

The Honorable Meredith Attwell Baker
President and CEO
CTIA – The Wireless Association
1400 16th Street, NW Suite 600
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Ms. Baker:

When Congress passed the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) of 1991, one goal was clear: consumers should not be subject to calls on their cellular phones without prior consent. Now, 25 years after TCPA's enactment, mobile devices have become ubiquitous in our society. Most Americans cannot imagine living without their mobile devices. With phones always in our palms, our pockets, or our purses, the need to ensure appropriate compliance with the TCPA has never been greater.

While the law has worked to successfully block countless unwanted calls, consumer complaints related to the TCPA remain among the most frequently received by the Federal Trade Commission and Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Consumers have made it clear they do not want their lives disrupted by calls and texts they have not consented to receive.

Wireless carriers are positioned to play an important role in further curtailing disruptive calls. Last year, the FCC gave the green light to service providers to offer robocall and robotext blocking technologies. We appreciate the work your member companies are undertaking to implement market-based solutions that consumers can use to stop unwanted robocalls and robotexts.

We also believe wireless carriers may have an opportunity to provide consumers and businesses more needed relief by establishing a reassigned numbers database, containing a list of cell phone numbers that have changed ownership. Periodically, consumers receive unwanted robocalls and robotexts because the previous holder of the phone number provided consent. Not only are robocalls and robotexts to reassigned numbers a nuisance to consumers, but they also create liabilities for calling parties.

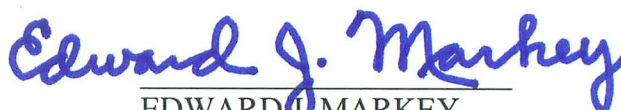
Wireless companies are in a unique position to create and maintain such a database, which could protect wireless subscribers from unwanted robocalls and robotexts. We invite your comments about: how wireless companies may be able to compile reassigned numbers in a database shortly after numbers are abandoned or relinquished; how access could be provided to calling parties to determine whether a number is still assigned to the party who gave consent to receive calls or texts at that number; whether carriers can cover the costs of developing and maintaining such a database by charging calling parties a fee for access.

A reassigned numbers database could bolster the important consumer protections established by the TCPA by providing businesses information they need to avoid robocalling and robotexting wrong numbers. We appreciate your attention to this important matter and welcome the opportunity to work with you and other stakeholders to develop this reassigned numbers database concept.

Sincerely,



JOHN THUNE
Chairman



EDWARD J. MARKEY
U.S. Senator

Cc: The Honorable Bill Nelson
Ranking Member