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## Washington Update: TCPA Week In the Capital

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Thursday, May 16, 2019

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) “summit” announcements, a Congressional oversight hearing with all FCC Commissioners, proposals for default call-blocking services, yet more sponsors for the Senate’s TRACED Act, and a forceful speech by Commissioner Michael O’Rielly calling for a “focus on real solutions, not maintaining overbroad regulations....” Where to begin?

On Monday, in keeping with the pledge that combatting illegal robocalls were his highest consumer priority, [Chairman Pai announced that there would be a “summit”](#) on July 11, to examine major phone company progress towards implementing SHAKEN/STIR caller ID authentication standards by year end. The Chairman plans to welcome “voice service providers and other technology stakeholders” to the Commission to discuss, among other things, “lessons learned” to date and “technical barriers, if any to deployment....” Enjoy Washington in July? The summit is open to the public.

The Chairman’s summit proclamation was followed Wednesday with news that he had circulated a proposed [Declaratory Ruling](#) – to be considered at the June 6 FCC meeting – that would, if adopted, allow “phone companies to block unwanted calls to their customers by default.” In addition, companies could allow consumers to block calls that are not on their own contact list. A second component of the proposal is a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking providing a safe harbor for “providers that implement network-wide blocking of calls that fail caller authentication under the SHAKEN/STIR framework once it is implemented.”

The news of this initiative came as all five Commissioners appeared before an oversight hearing by the House Energy and Commerce Committee’s Subcommittee on Communications and Technology. While there were many topics on the agenda, the subject of illegal robocalls was on the tip of the tongues of a number of members. You can watch for yourself [here](#). And while we are at it, Subcommittee Chairman Michael Doyle (D-PA) is working on a composite robocall bill as a follow up to the [recent legislative hearing](#). He hopes to have it assembled before the August recess. Of course, no “legislative report” would be complete without an update on the TRACED Act, S. 151 – it has hit eighty sponsors in the Senate.

Finally, [addressing the ACA International Washington Insights Conference today](#), Commissioner Michael O’Rielly noted that the “fog of uncertainty” in the aftermath of last year’s *ACA International* decision remains “thicker than ever.” He put the onus on those affected “to raise awareness of the need for corrective actions [for example, to the definition of an ATDS] to a much, much greater extent” with his colleagues and agency staff. So there.

All this and it is only Thursday in TCPAWorld.

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