



Jan 26, 2023

TO: House Committee On Business and Labor
FR: Jesse Lawrence-Weilmann, Campaign Associate, Oregon State Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG)
RE: In support of HB 2759

OSPIRG is a statewide, citizen-based organization representing thousands of Oregonians. OSPIRG supports HB 2759 as a common sense measure aimed at reducing the number of illegal robocalls Oregonians receive.

According to the Federal Communications Commission, illegal robocalls lead to approximately \$10 billion a year in fraud. Additionally, the FCC estimates that the benefits of eliminating the wasted time and nuisance caused by illegal scam robocalls will exceed \$3 billion annually.¹

Some of the worst cases of fraud stemming from robocalls in the last few years include scam calls about auto warranties, calls from con artists impersonating a consumer's bank or the IRS, or young people posing as a grandchild in trouble. Fraudsters often are able to fool victims because they "spoof" the Caller ID to make the call appear as if it's originating from a number belonging to a bank, the IRS or a police department in another state.

The scale of these robocalls and the magnitude of their impacts on individual victims need to be taken seriously. The national branch of our organization – U.S. PIRG – put out a report in 2021 which highlighted these facts.² Our report found that with current technology, scam callers can make millions of calls in just a few minutes, with each call costing just a few cents.³ As a result, the scale of the scam robocalls problem is bigger than ever. Oregon is no exception to this national trend. The number of these robocalls in our state have doubled in just a few years – from about 180 million in 2017 to 359 million in 2022.

For individual victims of these scam calls, the impact can be devastating. An elderly man had his bank account drained of more than \$124,000 after he was tricked into believing a call was from Amazon's security department.⁴

¹[Chairman Pai Proposes Mandating STIR/SHAKEN To Combat Robocalls](#), FCC, March 2020

²[MAKE THE RINGING STOP: THE FCC IS FINALLY FIGHTING BACK AGAINST ROBOCALLS](#), U.S. PIRG Education Fund, September 2021

³[Robocalls | Consumer Advice](#), FTC, June 2021

⁴[Robocallers, you're out](#), FTC, March 2019

⁴[Rocky River man loses over 124,000 after 2 men pose as Amazon security](#), News5 Cleveland, June 2021

Consumers are sick of dealing with illegal robocalls every day. By holding telecommunications companies responsible for taking reasonable steps to prevent illegal calls, this bill will make existing regulations aimed at addressing this problem more effective. For these reasons, OSPIRG urges you to support HB 2759.