

TC-1 Resolution Encouraging the Federal Communications Commission To Stop Robocalling and Improve the Efficiency of Numbering Resources by Auditing Telecommunications Carriers and Voice over Internet Protocol service providers Failing to Legally and Efficiently Use Finite Telephone Numbers

Whereas the North American Numbering Plan (NANP), the telephone numbering plan providing numbering resources to North America and the Caribbean, is currently expected to run out of telephone numbers by 2051; (NANPA website);

Whereas if current trends in telephone number usage continue, the NANP could run out of numbers even sooner;

Whereas according to industry numbering rules, when the NANP is scheduled to exhaust within 15 years, the North American Numbering Planning Administrator (NANPA) will commence work on a NANP expansion plan. (Section 6.2 of the NPA Allocation Plan and Assignment INC Guidelines);

Whereas based on current projections, planning for NANP expansion would begin in just 12 years in 2036 (ITN Report Appendix);

Whereas transitioning to an expanded plan would require moving to 12-digit dialing;

Whereas previous estimates by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) suggest that the transition to 12-digit dialing could have a societal cost of up to \$270 billion; (IOT Notice);

Whereas state commissions, in their efforts to ensure that telephone numbers are used efficiently and legally, are facing issues caused by carriers that fail to comply with federal numbering rules and the numbering authority delegated to the states;

Whereas, state commissions have partnered with and enjoyed a great deal of cooperation from many telecommunications carriers, especially large, national carriers; however, there remain bad actors whose misuse of numbering resources causes problems for the state commissions and the industry alike;

Whereas a number of state commissions have reported that many telecommunications carriers and Voice over Internet Protocol service providers fail to fulfil basic reporting requirements, over-inflate the forecasted need for telephone numbers, and use blocks of thousands of numbers inefficiently, contaminating them for future use by another carrier;

Whereas some telecommunications carriers and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) service providers are knowingly facilitating illegal robocalling and circumventing FCC rules by renting finite telephone numbering resources to wholesale telecommunications customers who are often located outside of the United States;

Whereas illegal robocallers seek out “local telephone numbers” from wholesale telecommunications carriers such as Interconnected (I-VoIP) providers and Competitive Local

Exchange Carriers to target unsuspecting victims by calling them from a number that looks “familiar” from a “neighboring” community;

Whereas under normal FCC rules, these scam efforts could be reduced, but by using rented telephone numbers from wholesale providers of telephone numbers, robocalling rules can still be defeated or circumvented;

Whereas state commissions, through their ongoing review of numbering resource requests from telecommunications carriers and VoIP providers, are in a unique position to identify inefficient, unusual, or bad behavior from telecommunication carriers and Voice over Internet Protocol service providers with direct access to numbering resources;

Whereas NARUC is reconstituting its Numbering Subcommittee to increase state commission focus on this issue;

Whereas the FCC has established an audit program in its rules and the NANPA budget includes funding for such audit expenses, but there has not been an audit of a telecommunications carrier or VoIP service providers in at least a decade; (47 CFR 52.15(k) and ITN Report)

Whereas as numbering resources dwindle, due in part to poor management by some telecommunications carriers and VoIP service providers with direct access to numbering resources, state commissions need more tools and resources available to them as the regulatory outpost of the FCC to enforce both state and federal numbering rules; *now therefore be it*

Resolved that the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), convened at its 2024 Winter Policy Summit in Washington, D.C., urges the FCC to act to provide updated guidance on how states should bring forward cases of telephone number resource mismanagement or suspected robocalling using rented telephone numbers to the Commission using the audit process outlined in 47 CFR 52.15(k).

Passed by the Committee on Telecommunications February 26, 2024
Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors February 28, 2024.