



**FROM THE DESK OF
COMMISSIONER
BRENT BAILEY
CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE**



The Central District is pleased to bring you the latest information concerning utility rates, project developments, Public Service Commission actions and other news you can use. I hope you will find this information to be a useful resource to learn about the Public Service Commission, consumer issues and the continuous work we are doing for the citizens in the Central District and across the state of Mississippi. Thank you again for allowing me to serve you in this capacity.

Brent Bailey



NO CALL AND TELEMARKETER RELIEF ISSUES

2019 Sets New Record for Robocalls

Now we know why it seems that the calls keep coming! According to the [YouMail Robocall Index](#) estimates, U.S. consumers received an estimated 58.5 billion robocalls for the year, marking a 22% increase from the 47.8 billion robocalls recorded in 2018, and a whopping 92% increase over the 30.5 billion robocalls in 2017. This huge increase led to President Trump signing legislation to help reduce the volume of unwanted robocalls. (See more on this legislation below)

For Mississippi, we received nearly 600 million robocalls calls in 2019. That represented a 24% increase over 2018. In fact, last year Mississippi ranked 13th in the nation for the number of robocalls received per person at 203. (Some people might think that is in a single week!) But that means we received on average less than one robocall per day.

Type of Robocall	Estimated 2019 Robocalls	Percentage 2019 Robocalls
Scams	25.9 billion	44%
Alerts and Reminders	13.0 billion	22%
Financial Reminders	11.4 billion	21%
Telemarketing	8.0 billion	14%

So what type of calls do consumers typically receive? The chart shows that we are overwhelmingly subjected to various types of scams. That is why we must be vigilant and avoid giving out any information over the phone to people you do not know or trust.

And now concerns about the global coronavirus pandemic have inspired a new wave of suspicious robocalls that appear to exploit consumer fears amid ongoing uncertainty about the COVID-19 outbreak. These calls promote a work-from-home scam, an HVAC cleaning scam, as well as questionable

marketing robocalls promoting coronavirus health services and supplements. We must not let our guard down. These schemes are designed to take your money or sow disinformation about the spread of the virus. Do not to pick up any calls from unfamiliar phone numbers and instead let them roll into voicemail.

President Trumps signs the TRACED Act

On December 30, 2019, the [Pallone-Thune TRACED Act](#), bipartisan legislation that should make life harder for the villains behind robocalls, was signed into law by President Trump. The new law won't end robocalls and scam calls overnight, but it does add some useful tools to regulators' toolboxes. You can read a summary of what the bill does [here](#). The Mississippi Public Service Commission will be working with the Federal Communications Commission and other stakeholders to ensure that people get real relief from these relentless and illegal calls.



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Three Companies Charged for over 836 Alleged No-Call Violations

The Mississippi Public Service Commission in cooperation with the Mississippi Attorney General's Office has [charged three companies](#) for alleged violations of the Mississippi No-Call law.

The three companies charged for allegedly violating the Mississippi Telephone Solicitation Act, Miss. Code Ann. § 77-3-701, et seq. include CS Marketing, LLC, CMWEBIT, LLC and Turnkey Auto Group, Inc. An investigation by the Commission found these companies have allegedly been calling numerous consumers whose numbers are on the Mississippi Do Not Call Registry. The three companies represent 438 complaints, more than 836 violations and face \$6.3 million in fines. The Office of the Attorney General sent the Notices of Alleged Violation on behalf of the Commission.

MPSC Issues \$235,000 in Fines to Two Telemarketers

The Mississippi Public Service Commission has also [charged two telemarketers](#) with violations of the Mississippi No-Call law. Notices of alleged violations have been recently filed against Subscription Ink Co. and Long Distance Gurus, LLC. Investigations determined that these two companies made 47 illegal calls to Mississippians.

From the start of 2020, additional cases have been filed against Manassah Jordan Ministries, who has also previously received citations from the Federal Communications Commission, Arrowbridge Holdings and Empire Consumer Services.

BREAKING DOWN MISSISSIPPI'S NO CALL PROGRAM

Understanding more about the process and how to file a complaint

The Central District Office [issued a press release](#) explaining the complete process of registering for Mississippi's No Call Program and filing a complaint against illegal telemarketing calls made to consumers and businesses in Mississippi.

The Mississippi No Call Registry is a list, which is maintained and updated by the Mississippi Public Service Commission (MPSC), of residential, cellular and business telephone subscribers who wish to reduce the number of telephone solicitations they receive. The program is free to all telephone customers in the state of Mississippi. Consumers may register an unlimited number of telephone numbers. However, the only numbers that will be added to the Mississippi No Call list must be valid Mississippi residential, cellular or business telephone numbers whose name and address match the name and address provided by Directory Assistance for that number.

Businesses and consumers may register for the No Call program via mail, using the [Mississippi No Call App](#), calling the toll free number: 1-86NOCALLMS (1-866-622-5567) or by visiting the home page of the No Call program: <https://www.psc.ms.gov/nocall/home>. Should you receive an illegal telemarketing or fraudulent scam call or text message, you can file a complaint via <https://www.psc.state.ms.us/NoCallV2/complaint.aspx> or by using the app, which can be found by searching "PSC No-Call" in the iTunes App Store or Google Play Marketplace.



The Mississippi No Call staff stand ready to assist you!