



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Senator Hoylman Announces Effort to Protect New Yorkers From Unwanted Robocalls

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL May 7, 2018



Legislation will require telephone providers to shield consumers from menace of intrusive & exploitative robocalls

Senator Hoylman: “Enough is enough. By allowing robocalls to continue unabated, telephone companies effectively condone this harassment and undermine the broader public trust.”

State Senator Brad Hoylman (D/WFP- Manhattan) announced new legislation today that will protect consumers from the harassment and abuse of unwanted robocalls. The proposed legislation will prohibit robocalling without consent, and will require telephone companies

to offer consumers free tools, on both landline and cell phones, to stop unwanted robocalls.

Senator Hoylman has been working with Consumers Union, the advocacy division of Consumer Reports, and with the National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of its low-income clients, in developing the legislation.

The volume of robocalls has reached epidemic proportions. Americans received an estimated 3.2 billion automated scam calls in March 2018, many of which were placed illegally without consent of the consumer. Unwanted robocalls have also disproportionately targeted New Yorkers, as the 917 area code in Greater New York City ranks as the 5th worst impacted area code in the United States. And while protections such as the federally imposed “Do Not Call Registry” help prevent the intrusive calls of legitimate companies, they are ineffective against many actors who target consumers with deceptive robocalls.

Senator Hoylman’s legislation will require that all callers must obtain the consumer's consent before sending any non-emergency autodialed call, whether to a cell phone or a landline, and establishes a private right of action for individuals who are illegally targeted. The legislation also makes clear that consumers can rescind their consent by any reasonable means. Additionally, it requires phone companies to offer technology to subscribers, at no cost, to block or divert autodialed calls.

Senator Hoylman said: “Like so many New Yorkers, everyone in my family has been annoyed by robocalls on a near daily basis. These robocalls are a scourge on the public-at-large, and my constituents have been vocal about the extent to which these calls infringe on their privacy and interrupt their daily lives.

Enough is enough. By allowing robocalls to continue unabated, telephone companies effectively condone this harassment and undermine the broader public trust. I’m pleased to

be working with Consumers Union and the National Consumer Law Center to tackle this problem head on.”

Maureen Mahoney, Policy Analyst for Consumers Union, said: “Consumers continue to be harassed daily by unwanted robocalls. These calls not only compromise consumers' privacy, but too often, robocalls are also scams that can cost them millions. Swift action is needed. Senator Hoylman’s legislation will extend legal protections against unwanted robocalls, and ensure that all New York consumers have access to effective, no-cost tools to stop them.”