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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG Kaul Announces Formation of a Nationwide Anti-Robocall Litigation Task Force

Attorneys General form a national, bipartisan Task Force to combat robocalling

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Kaul today announced that the State of Wisconsin is joining a nationwide Anti-Robocall Litigation Task Force of 50 attorneys general to investigate and take legal action against the telecommunications companies responsible for bringing a majority of foreign robocalls into the United States. This bipartisan nationwide Task Force has one goal: to cut down on illegal robocalls.

“We have to reduce the number of illegal robocalls that folks receive,” said AG Kaul. “I’m proud to join this bipartisan group of AGs in working to crack down on the telecom companies that are failing to do their part to stop illegal scam calls.”

The Task Force has issued 20 civil investigative demands to 20 gateway providers and other entities that are allegedly responsible for a majority of foreign robocall traffic. Gateway providers that bring foreign traffic into the U.S. telephone network have a responsibility to ensure the traffic is legal, but these providers are not taking sufficient action to stop robocall traffic. In many cases, they appear to be intentionally turning a blind eye in return for steady revenue. The Task Force will focus on the bad actors throughout the telecommunications industry, to help reduce the number robocalls that Wisconsinites receive and benefit the companies that are following the rules.

Attorney General Kaul is committed to stopping illegal and unwanted calls. According to the National Consumer Law Center and Electronic Privacy Information Center, over 33 million scam robocalls are made to Americans every day. These scam calls include Social Security Administration fraud against seniors, Amazon scams against consumers, and many other scams targeting all consumers, including some of our most vulnerable citizens. An estimated \$29.8 billion dollars was stolen through scam calls in 2021. Most of this scam robocall traffic originates

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overseas. The Task Force is focused on shutting down the providers that profit from this illegal scam traffic and refuse to take steps to otherwise mitigate these scam calls.

Attorney General Kaul offers the following tips to avoid scams and unwanted calls:

- Be wary of callers who specifically ask you to pay by gift card, wire transfer, or cryptocurrency. For example, the Internal Revenue Service does not accept iTunes gift cards.
- Look out for prerecorded calls from imposters posing as government agencies. Typically, the Social Security Administration does not make phone calls to individuals.
- If you suspect fraudulent activity, immediately hang-up and do not provide any personal information.
- Contact the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) by email at DATCPHotline@Wisconsin.gov or through a toll-free hotline at (800) 422-7128.
- File a Do Not Call or Text complaint with DATCP here: https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Online_Services/DoNotCall.aspx