

# NEWS RELEASE

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Office of Commissioner Brandon Presley  
MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
NORTHERN DISTRICT

## **PSC Brandon Presley: Cell Phone Companies Should Do More to Fight Robocalls or Lose State-Approved Federal Funds**

*Presley asks Public Utilities Staff to Investigate if Phone Companies Profit from Robocalls*

Jackson, Mississippi (April 18, 2018) – Public Service Commission Chairman Brandon Presley wants to stop federal funds to cellular telephone companies if they don't do more to stop robocalls and has asked the Public Utilities Staff to investigate whether telephone companies profit from robocalls. Presley wants the PSC to take stronger action to stop the calls by requiring cellular telephone companies to offer free robocall blocking technology and develop ways to stop "Caller ID Spoofing" where telemarketers steal phone numbers to make calls or risk losing PSC-approved federal funds. The PSC is charged with approving federal funds from the Universal Service Fund/Connect America Fund. Last year, cellular companies received over \$109 million in state-approved federal funds.

"No one could do more to stop the scourge of robocalls than cellular companies. The companies could and should be doing more. Some have apps, some don't but all of them should explain to the PSC what they are doing to stop these calls before we approve one more penny of federal money. We should require them to create free robocall blocking technology and develop a plan to stop Caller ID spoofing along with other efforts. If these companies aren't willing to help, they should not get public money," said Chairman Presley. "We also need to know if these companies are profiteering off of these calls, that is why I am asking the Staff to look into this matter."

-1 of 2-



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In an effort to punish telemarketers the PSC has released a first-in-the-nation No-Call app for smartphones that allows customers to get on the state's Do Not Call list and report complaints from the convenience of their mobile phone. Furthermore, just this year the Commission aided in introducing legislation to create a private right to sue telemarketers, though the bill failed to make it to the Governor. In addition, the PSC just last month fined 24 telemarketers for violating the no call law.

Presley encouraged Mississippians to download the PSC's smartphone app, which can be found by searching "MS No Call" in the iTunes App Store or Google Play Marketplace. Also, landline phones can be registered at [www.psc.state.ms.us](http://www.psc.state.ms.us) or by calling Commissioner Presley's office at 1-800-637-7722



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