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**CO-SPONSOR THE BARTON-ENGEL BILL, H.R. 5126,**  
**THE "TRUTH IN CALLER ID ACT OF 2006"**

BUD ALBRIGHT, STAFF DIRECTOR

April 26, 2006

Dear Colleague,


We recently introduced H.R. 5126, the "Truth in Caller ID Act of 2006." This bill is designed to stop the deceptive practice of "spoofing" caller identification (caller ID) information, transmitting misleading or inaccurate caller ID.

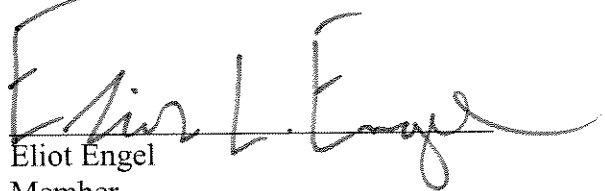
Caller ID "spoofing" occurs when a caller masquerades as someone else by falsifying the number that appears on the recipient's caller ID display. Caller ID spoofing can make a call appear to come from any phone number the caller wishes. For a number of years it has been possible to "spoof" or manipulate caller ID, although it required specific phone connections and expensive equipment. Today, however, some VoIP service providers are offering connections to the public switched telephone network that allow callers to transmit any caller ID information the caller chooses. Additionally, there are a number of online websites that offer spoofing services, eliminating the need for any special hardware. Not only do these services mask the correct caller ID information, but many offer voice scrambling services which make the caller sound like someone of the opposite sex. For obvious reasons, caller ID spoofing has quickly emerged as a useful tool for identity thieves and other scam artists. Additionally, many business functions, from credit card verification to automatic call routing, depend on caller ID for security purposes, which spoofing renders useless.

Consumers use caller ID services to protect themselves from unwanted calls and contact, including from those who may want to do them harm. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has undertaken an investigation of these online websites that offer caller ID spoofing services, but unfortunately under current FCC regulations, there is no broad mandate that all callers transmit accurate caller ID information. In fact, there is *nothing* that prohibits the deceptive manipulation of caller ID. H.R. 5126, the "Truth in Caller ID Act of 2006," makes this practice illegal while providing reasonable exemptions for law enforcement activities.

We hope your boss is interested in co-sponsoring the Barton-Engel bill, H.R. 5126, the "Truth in Caller ID Act of 2006." Please contact Kelly Cole (x5-8048) with the Committee's office or Pete Leon (x5-2464) with Rep. Engel's office, if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

  
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Joe Barton  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce

  
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Eliot Engel  
Member  
Committee on Energy and Commerce