Date June 28, 2019

Attorney General Moody's Week In Review - June 28, 2019



Robocalls are a growing problem nationwide. Not only are they annoying, the calls are often part of a scam designed to trick consumers into parting with their hard-earned cash. My office is working diligently with our federal partners to stop these illegal calls, and this week, we joined the Federal Trade Commission in an effort to block one billion robocalls nationwide as part of Operation Call it Quits.

The robocall crackdown involved more than 90 actions across the country. As part of the crackdown, our office took action against three illegal operations targeting Floridians. Many of the victims of these illegal robocalls were seniors who had registered their phone numbers on the Do Not Call registry.

The calls purported to offer free products, but when consumers signed up they were billed monthly charges. Some offered credit card interest-rate-reduction services guaranteeing that consumers would save thousands if they would pay an upfront fee.

Working with the FTC, we shut down these scams, securing money judgments valued in the millions of dollars against the defendants and in one of the cases,

provided an average of a $1,000 each in consumer refunds. This nationwide effort is just the latest action our office has taken to stop illegal robocalls.

Earlier this year, I urged Congress to enact the TRACED Act to reduce the number of illegal robocalls and fight spoofing—the practice of using technology to disguise a caller's phone number. Last month, our office advocated for the Federal Communications Commission to enforce rules against caller ID spoofing.

There were more than 48 billion robocalls in 2018. Robocalls remain the number one source of consumer complaints received by the FTC and FCC, resulting in millions in consumer losses every year. It will take a massive collaborative effort to stop illegal robocalls, but we must continue to work together toward this end—for a stronger, safer Florida.



In The News

Fla. AG Ashley Moody getting revenge on robocalls, WFLA

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Operation 'Call it Quits' cracking down on illegal robocalls in Florida, ABC Action News

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AG Moody, Uber Team Up to Combat Human Trafficking Ahead of 2020 Super Bowl, Bay News 9

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Attorney general launches app to help Floridians report price-gouging during emergencies, Villages-News

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Ashley Moody leads roundtable on law enforcement and mental health, Florida Politics

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Gov. DeSantis signs bill aimed to toughen human-trafficking laws in Florida, WTXL Tallahassee

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SCAM ALERT: Beware of new skimming, spoofing and stealing scam reported in Florida, ABC Action News

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Warning: New skimming, spoofing, stealing scam alert in Florida, WJXT

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Protecting Floridians

Attorney General Moody Hosts Mental Health and Criminal Justice Round Table Discussion in West Palm Beach



Attorney General Ashley Moody hosted part two of the Attorney General's Mental Health and Criminal Justice Round Table Summer Series in West Palm Beach. The series focuses on mental health issues facing Florida's criminal justice system and best practices and ideas for improvement in our state. Part two of the series centered on how to make a difference in reducing recidivism and streamlining costs by coming up with innovative ways to handle persons experiencing a mental health episode prior to arrest.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "I want to thank everyone who participated in today's discussion. Having a better understanding of common mental health issues and how to interact with individuals suffering from these afflictions can help improve the safety of law enforcement officers and the public while reducing recidivism and streamlining costs." Read More

Attorney General Moody and Uber Announce Human Trafficking Interdiction Training Ahead of 2020 Super Bowl



Attorney General Ashley Moody and Uber announced efforts to stop human trafficking ahead of Super Bowl LIV. The National Football League's championship game will be played at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens Feb. 2, 2020. Major sporting events attract thousands of visitors from around the world, including human traffickers. While these events can also create illegal markets, human trafficking is a global issue that impacts all cities and forms of transportation on a daily basis.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "We are starting now, sending a consistent and strong message to anyone who would engage in human trafficking during the Super Bowl, that we will have hundreds of law enforcement officers, transportation drivers and other dedicated citizens trained to spot and report you. I want to thank Uber's leadership team for their dedication to fighting human trafficking and working to secure a safe environment for fans and families traveling to Florida to watch the championship game." Read More

CONSUMER ALERT: New Skimming Spoofing Stealing Scam Reported in Florida



Attorney General Ashley Moody is issuing a Consumer Alert following growing reports of a new multilayered scam involving skimming, spoofing and stealing financial information. The scam works like this: a scammer uses a skimmer to steal credit or debit card information, then uses spoofing technology to pose as the representative of a financial institution. Once the scammer reaches the target, they inform the target that an account is compromised and the CV2 security code is needed to freeze the account. The scammer then takes this information to make purchases, withdraw funds or sell the stolen account information.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “This scam incorporates some of the worst uses of modern technology to drain victims’ bank accounts and ruin their credit. Floridians must arm themselves with the latest information and take steps to avoid these fraudsters to protect their hard-earned money.” Read More



ate's Opioid Litigation

Attorney

General Ashley Moody released the following statement on Governor Ron DeSantis signing HB 1253 into law. This new law will allow the Attorney General's Office to access limited information from Florida's Prescription Drug Monitoring Database to be used under protective order in the state's ongoing opioid litigation:

"I want to thank Governor DeSantis for signing this important legislation into law and giving us more tools to fight the opioid crisis that is devastating families and killing 17 people a day in our state. The destruction caused by opioid abuse is undeniable and this epidemic is ravaging our communities. Those who helped fuel this man-made crisis must be held accountable and this new law will help us do that.

"The law would also not be possible without the leadership of our bill sponsors Representative Amber Mariano and Senator Tom Lee. I also want to thank Senate President Bill Galvano, House Speaker Josè Oliva, Representative Chris Sprowls, Senator Wilton Simpson, as well as all House and Senate leadership, for their commitment to this important issue and passing this vital legislation."

Seven Arrested in Connection to Prescription Drug Trafficking Ring



Attorney

General Ashley Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution, in conjunction with the Broward Sheriff's Office, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Sunny Isles Police Department, arrested seven individuals operating a large-scale prescription drug trafficking ring. The operation recruited patients to order and obtain prescription opioids using fraudulent documentation for controlled substances from doctors. Authorities arrested the defendants in Broward, Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "This criminal organization used fraudulent and illegal tactics to obtain massive quantities of prescription opioids to peddle for profit. Criminal operations like this are helping fuel the opioid crisis that is claiming 17 lives a day in our state—but I promise you—I will continue to do everything within the power of the Florida Attorney General's Office, including working with our great state and federal partners, to stop the illegal flow of these highly addictive drugs and end this crisis ravaging our state." Read More

Events

This week, Attorney General Ashley Moody spoke at the Florida Police Chiefs Association Summer Conference Awards Luncheon in Wesley Chapel. The program recognized some of the exceptional men and women protecting communities around Florida.



Attorney General Moody catching up with Back the Blue Award recipient Zechariah Cartledge at the FPCA Summer Conference. To read about Zechariah’s efforts honoring law enforcement, click here.






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Attorney General Moody talking with local law enforcement officials during the second Mental Health and Criminal Justice Round Table Summer Series event in West Palm Beach. The round table focused on improving the safety of law enforcement and the public while reducing recidivism and streamlining costs when targeting mental health issues prior to incidents and arrests. To watch the roundtable, click here.



Attorney General Moody with Palm Beach County State Attorney Dave Aronberg, Florida Senators Gayle Harrell and Darryl Rouson, and Florida House Representative Toby Overdorf following part two of the Attorney General's Mental Health and Criminal Justice Round Table Summer Series.



Attorney General Moody and Uber representatives announcing new human

trafficking interdiction efforts at a news conference in Miami. Super Bowl LIV will be played in Miami Gardens next February. More than 100,000 Florida Uber drivers will receive additional training sessions to spot instances of human trafficking to better protect visitors during Super Bowl week.



Attorney General Moody speaking at the annual Rural County Summit at the Florida Public Safety Institute in Gadsden County. Attorney General Moody stressed the importance of using the latest and most advanced tools to protect Florida's children from violence. To hear the Attorney General's remarks, click here.

