

HOUSE BILL 2697

By Kumar

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 67, Chapter 4 and Title 67, Chapter 6, relative to telecommunications services.

WHEREAS, in 2018, there were an estimated 47.8 billion robocalls made in the United States, an increase of 56.8% over the estimated 30.5 billion robocalls in 2017; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the number of robocalls made equate to approximately 150 or more robocalls for every adult in the United States over the course of the year; and

WHEREAS, attempts by the telecommunications industry and the federal government to reduce or eliminate scams from robocalls have been generally ineffective; and

WHEREAS, economic disincentives can be a very effective tool to curb abusive practices; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 67, Chapter 6, Part 2, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

(a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, a surcharge in the amount of one cent (1¢) is imposed for each telephone call made if the call originates in, or is received in, this state.

(b) A provider of telecommunications services shall collect and remit surcharges imposed under subsection (a) in the same manner as sales and use taxes.

(c) This section does not apply to a telephone call made via a telecommunications service billed or charged to federal, state, or local governmental entities or agencies of such entities.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect January 1, 2021, the public welfare requiring it.