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# Security Newsletter

9 March 2020

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# FCC Proposes to Fine Wireless Carriers \$200M for Selling Customer Location Data



The U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) today proposed fines of more than \$200 million against the nation's four largest wireless carriers for selling access to their customers' location information without taking adequate precautions to prevent unauthorized access to that data. While the fines would be among the largest the FCC has ever levied, critics say the penalties don't go far enough to deter wireless carriers from continuing to sell customer location data.

The FCC proposed fining T-Mobile \$91 million; AT&T faces more than \$57 million in fines; Verizon is looking at more than \$48 million in penalties; and the FCC said Sprint should pay more than \$12 million. An FCC statement (PDF) said "the size of the proposed fines for the four wireless carriers differs based on the length of time each carrier apparently continued to sell access to its customer location information without reasonable safeguards and the number of entities to which each carrier continued to sell such access."

"Time and again, from Facebook to Equifax, massive companies take reckless disregard for Americans' personal information, knowing they can write off comparatively tiny fines as the cost of doing business," Wyden said in a written statement. "The only way to truly protect Americans' personal information is to pass strong privacy legislation like my Mind Your Own Business Act to put teeth into privacy laws and hold CEOs personally responsible for lying about protecting Americans' privacy."

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