



work more effectively to help Americans who are harmed from abroad.

Third, telephone pretexting. In May 2006, well before the Hewlett-Packard story became national news, the Commission filed five complaints against Web-based operations that obtained and sold consumers' confidential telephone records to third parties in violation of the FTC Act. To date, the Commission has resolved two cases with consent orders that impose strong remedies, including bans on obtaining or selling phone records, prohibitions against pretexting to obtain other personal information, and disgorgement of profits. Last year, a law making pretexting a criminal offense was enacted. But there is still a need for legislation that would close the gap and give the Commission authority to seek civil penalties against pretexters.