

Luján Announces Plans to Introduce Bill Combating Threat of COVID-19 Scams

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NAMBÉ, N.M.— During a remote hearing of the House Consumer Protection and Commerce Subcommittee, Congressman Ben Ray Luján, D-N.M., the U.S. House Assistant Speaker, announced plans to introduce legislation to address the growing threat of COVID-19 scams by empowering the Federal Trade Commission and state attorneys general to hold bad actors accountable.

Citing shocking statistics on the pervasiveness of COVID-19 scams, Luján explained: “These numbers represent real suffering and loss. That’s why I plan to introduce the *Stopping COVID Scams Act of 2020*, which would allow the FTC to levy civil penalties on COVID-19 scammers.”

“A stronger FTC with civil penalty authority would provide stronger consumer protections, even if we weren’t currently facing this tsunami of COVID-19 scams,” Sally Greenberg, executive director of the National Consumers League said. “And at the very least, we think the FTC should have the tools it needs to go after scammers who are taking advantage of the moment to defraud millions of consumers.

“So, we would be proud to support your bill once it gets introduced, Congressman Luján, and we thank you for your leadership and helping to protect consumers,” she concluded.

Luján recently cosponsored the *COVID–19 Price Gouging Prevention Act*, which was included in the *Heroes Act*, to provide the FTC and state attorneys general the authority to seek civil penalties from individuals and companies engaging in price gouging of goods and services during the COVID-19 emergency.

Last year, he voted in favor of the *TRACED Act*, which allows the federal government to increase enforcement against robocallers. The *TRACED Act* was signed into law in December.

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