

March 31, 2023

Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580

**Re: Trade Regulation Rule on Impersonation of Government and Businesses, R207000,
Docket No. FTC-2022-0064**

To the Federal Trade Commission:

We write to you as a coalition of trade associations and professional organizations in the face-to-face business events industry, urging you to proceed expeditiously to a final rule targeting government and business imposters.

As the Commission noted in a recent blog post, impersonator scams were the most reported type of scam in 2022, with an estimated \$2.6 billion in losses.¹² These impersonation scams have serious economic consequences for businesses, including non-profits. Notably, reported losses from scammers impersonating businesses grew nearly 50 percent compared to 2021.

It has been three months since comments were submitted in response to the Commission's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Government and Business Impersonation Fraud ("NPRM")³, and more than a year since the launch of the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) on this matter.⁴

In that time, impersonation scams impacting non-profits, including trade shows have continued to increase. For example, the Consumer Technology Association® (CTA), which owns and produces CES®, has received at least a half dozen reports of impersonation scams using the CES logo, during and in the two months following this year's show. These impersonation scams varied from the sale of false discounted badges to fraudulent websites offering hotel bookings for CES.

¹ *The top scams of 2022*, Federal Trade Commission, <https://consumer.ftc.gov/consumer-alerts/2023/02/top-scams-2022>.

² *Id.*

³ Trade Regulation Rule on Impersonation of Government and Businesses, 87 Fed. Reg. 62,741 (Oct. 17, 2022) ("NPRM").

⁴ Trade Regulation Rule on Impersonation of Government and Businesses, Proposed Rule, 86 Fed. Reg. 72,901 (Dec. 23, 2021) ("ANPRM").

Similarly, Exhibitions & Conferences Alliance (ECA) members have experienced an uptick in event attendee list sale scams. These increasingly sophisticated impersonation scams use copyrighted event names, logos, and fake email signatures to create the illusion that the efforts of the scammers are conducted with the approval of the event organizers and service providers.

Several National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) Show attendees and exhibitors have alerted NAB staff of emails and phone calls from impersonators purporting to sell attendee contact information. One exhibitor received as many as 50 impersonator solicitations and reported that the frequent calls and emails are “overwhelming and hard to manage.” Many NAB Show exhibitors are small businesses that are ill-equipped to handle the apparent onslaught of impersonator solicitations.

Yet another trade association, the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA) reports that in the first three months of 2023 alone, its members received more than 75 phishing and impersonation emails and texts connected to its Product Safety Conference in February and its Annual Executive Summit in March. These emails peddled fake contact lists and deployed other techniques, including the unauthorized use of the AAFA logo, in an effort to appear legitimate and lure unsuspecting recipients into fraudulent transactions.

We commend the Commission for its proposed rule targeting government and business imposters, and were pleased that the NPRM included non-profit organizations in the proposed definition of “business.”⁵ With millions of Americans expected to attend in-person conferences and events this year, continued impersonation scams such as those involving hotel bookings, the sale of attendee lists, and event space fraud, remain an on-going threat to the reputations of each of our organizations.

We implore the Commission to proceed to adopting a final rule as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

ACA International
Accessories Council
ACTFL
Advanced Textiles Association
AIHA
Airborne Public Safety Association
AMC Institute
AMC Source
America Council of Engineering Companies
American Academy of Neurology

American Apparel & Footwear Association
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases
American Association of Clinical Endocrinology
American Association of Endodontists
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American Association of Orthodontists
American Association of Woodturners
American Bus Association

⁵ Many of the associations signing this letter have submitted comments in the rulemaking, which contain their more detailed feedback on the proposed rule, including that the FTC should include the limitations of “means and instrumentalities” liability in the text of the rule to make clear that it applies only to entities that have knowledge or consciously avoid knowing that they are making representations being used to commit impersonation fraud.

American Coatings Association
American College of Emergency Physicians
American College of Healthcare Executives
American College of Rheumatology
American Feed Industry Association
American Frozen Food Institute
American Institute of Steel Construction
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Pet Products Association
American Retirement Association
American Society for Nutrition
American Society for Radiation Oncology
American Society of Hematology
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
American Sportfishing Association
AmericanHort
Apartment Association of Greater Dallas
Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles
Apartment Association of Greater Orlando
Apartment Association of North Carolina
Apartment Association of Tarrant County
Architectural Woodwork Institute
Arizona Multihousing Association
Arizona Nursery Association
ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership
ASIS International
Associated Builders and Contractors of Georgia, Inc.
Associated General Contractors of Minnesota
Association for Athletic Training Education
Association for Financial Technology
Association for Materials Protection and Performance
Association for Supply Chain Management
Association for the Advancement of Blood and Biotherapies
Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International
Association Guidance
Association Headquarters
Association of Equipment Manufacturers

Associations North
Atlanta Apartment Association
Audiovisual and Integrated Experience Association
Austin Apartment Association
Auto Care Association
Bay Area Apartment Association
Billiard Congress of America
Billiard Education Foundation
BLF Management
BOMA Orlando
Building Owners and Managers Association of Georgia
Care Management Innovations, LLC
Career Education Colleges and Universities
Center for Exhibition Industry Research
CFP Board
Change by Design LLC
Cherokee County Educational Foundation
Chicagoland Apartment Association
Co.Innovation Consulting
Columbus Apartment Association
Comexposium
Construction Specifications Institute
Consumer Technology Association
Destinations International
Edison Electric Institute
Electrical Association
Elevate Management Company
Elite Catering and Event Professionals
EmeraldX
Equipment Leasing and Finance Association
Events Industry Council
Exhibition Services & Contractors Association
Exhibitions & Conferences Alliance
Experiential Designers & Producers Association
Fazio International Ltd.
First Coast Apartment Association
Florida Apartment Association
Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
Florida Dental Association
Florida Festivals and Events Association

Florida Municipal Electric Association
FMI- The Food Industry Association
Georgia Addiction Counselors Association
Georgia Amusement & Music Operators Association
Georgia Apartment Association
Georgia Association of Convenience Stores
Georgia Association of Water Professionals
Georgia Green Industry Association, Inc.
Georgia Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
Georgia Pest Control Association
Georgia Ready Mixed Concrete Association
Georgia Society of Association Executives
Global Management Partners
Grain Elevator and Processing Society
Hawai'i Pharmacists Association
Health Care Administrators Association
Healthcare Financial Management Association
Heart Rhythm Society
Household & Commercial Products Association
Housing First Minnesota
Illinois Green Industry Association
Indiana Apartment Association
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Informa Markets
Institute of Food Technologists
Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc.
International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions
International Association of Exhibitions & Events
International Association of Fairs & Expositions
International Association of Movers
International Association of Venue Managers
International Congress and Convention Association
International Foodservice Distributors Association
International Franchise Association
International Fresh Produce Association

International Housewares Association
International Institute of Building Enclosure Consultants
International Practice Management Association
International Sign Association
Investment Adviser Association
IPC – Build Electronics Better
Kentucky Pharmacists Association
Marine Retailers Association of the Americas
MEA Energy Association
Meeting Professionals International
Metal Construction Association
Metal Treating Institute
Mid-South Independent School Business Officers, Inc.
Minnesota Asphalt Pavement Association
Minnesota Broadcasters Association
Minnesota Builders Exchange
Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association
Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association
Minnesota Pharmacists Association
Minnesota School Boards Association
Minnesota Society of Health-System Pharmacists
Minnesota Technology Association
Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association
Multifamily NW
National Affordable Housing Management Association
National Apartment Association
National Association of Broadcasters
National Association of Elevator Contractors
National Association of Home Builders
National Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies
National Automatic Merchandising Association
National Automobile Dealers Association
National Council of Teachers of English
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
National Council for the Social Studies

National Defense Industrial Association
National Demolition Association
National Lumber & Building Material
Dealers Association
National Safety Council
National Science Teaching Association
National Speakers Association
National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association
Nevada State Apartment Association
New Jersey Apartment Association
North American Meat Institute
North American Veterinary Community
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association
Offshore Technology Conference
Ohio Society of Association Professionals
Oklahoma Society of Association Executives
PCMA
Pennsylvania Apartment Association
Pennsylvania Pharmacists Association
Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin
Plastics Industry Association
PMMI | The Association for Packaging and
Processing
Portable Sanitation Association
International
PRINTING United Alliance
Professional Direction, Inc.
Professional Liability Underwriting Society
Property Management Association of
Michigan
Radiological Society of North America
RE+ Events
Refrigerated Foods Association
RIMS, The Risk and Insurance Management
Society
Salon & Spa Professional Association, Inc.
San Antonio Apartment Association
School Nutrition Association
Security Industry Association
SHRM-Atlanta
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Society of Actuaries
Society of Independent Show Organizers
Society of Petroleum Engineers
South Carolina Pharmacy Association

South Dakota Pharmacists Association
South East Florida Apartment Association
Southeast Tourism Society
Southern Association of Independent
Schools
Southern California Rental Housing
Association
Spray Polyurethane Foam Alliance
Tennessee Pharmacists Association
TESOL International Association
Texas Apartment Association
Texas Society of Association Executives
The Apartment Association of Greater
Dallas
The Apartment Association of Louisiana
The Harrington Company
The Institute for Operations Research and
the Management Sciences
The Printing & Imaging Association of
Georgia
The Toy Association
Transportation Intermediaries Association
Triangle Apartment Association
U.S. Poultry & Egg Association
UFI
US Poultry & Egg Association
US Poultry & Egg Harold E Ford Foundation
Virginia Apartment Management
Association
W Consulting
Washington Multi-Family Housing
Association
Washington State Pharmacy Association
Water Environment Federation
West and Southeast REALTORS of the
Valley, Inc.
West Virginia Nursery & Landscape
Association
Winsight