



United States of America
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20580

**Prepared Remarks of Chairman Joseph J. Simons
Department of Justice Elder Fraud Event
March 7, 2019**

Protecting older adults in the marketplace has been a top FTC priority for decades. I'm delighted to join our partners in this coordinated strike against tech support scams.

The FTC brings several tools to the table: law enforcement; education; and data analysis. Just last week, a federal court in Utah granted our request to stop an alleged tech support scam called *Elite IT*. We charged that the defendants duped consumers—many of whom were older adults—into giving them remote access to their computers, into believing the computers were infected or needed repair, and into buying \$10 million of unnecessary software and services. The court's temporary restraining order freezes the defendants' assets so that—hopefully—we can return money to victims at the end of the case.

This case is just one of many we've brought over the years against tech support scammers, and we are determined to fight these fraudsters, whether they're in the U.S. or abroad.

Today, we also released new educational materials that show how tech support scams work and what consumers can do about them. For example, hang up on unexpected calls from anyone who claims to be from tech support. That's a scam. Our materials, which include a new video with an older American's first-hand account of the scam, are at ftc.gov/techsupportscams.

We also want to spotlight some critical consumer complaint data from the FTC's Consumer Sentinel Network. People 60 and older are great at spotting and reporting fraud, and are typically *less likely* than younger people to lose money. This is not the case with tech support scams. In 2018, people 60 and older were about *five times* more likely to report losing money to tech support scams than younger people, and the reported median loss was \$500.

The FTC is committed to protecting older adults, and I look forward to continuing our joint work to ensure all consumers are protected in a safe, competitive marketplace.