

Attorney General Raoul Supports FTC Rule Banning Fake And Misleading Consumer Reviews

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CHICAGO - Attorney General Kwame Raoul co-lead a coalition of 23 attorneys general in support of the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) new proposed rule aimed at combatting deceptive practices concerning the use of consumer reviews.

“Consumers rely on accurate information to make decisions that are in their best financial interest. When companies attempt to manipulate the marketplace with fake or misrepresented reviews of products, consumers suffer and pay the price,” Raoul said. “I am proud to stand with my fellow attorneys general in support of the Federal Trade Commission’s efforts to crack down on fake or misleading reviews.”

Raoul and the coalition filed a [comment letter](#) with the FTC in response to the FTC’s notice of proposed rulemaking. In the letter, the attorneys general were supportive of the proposed Trade Regulation Rule on the Use of Consumer Reviews and Testimonials, which, if enacted, will specifically prohibit:

- Fake or false consumer reviews.
- Repurposing reviews for one product to look like reviews for different products.
- Buying positive or negative reviews.
- Reviews by individuals affiliated with the seller without proper disclosures.
- Representing a website or entity that is providing independent reviews when the website or entity is owned or controlled by a seller.
- Suppressing reviews.
- Buying and selling fake indicators of social media influence.

In addition to supporting the proposed rule, the attorneys general also offered suggestions to strengthen the proposed rule’s provisions regarding review suppression.

Today’s letter is the latest in Raoul’s efforts to ensure that consumers have accurate information before purchasing goods and services. In 2019, Raoul joined five state attorneys general and the Federal Trade Commission in filing a lawsuit alleging that iHeartMedia Inc. and Google LLC provided false endorsements of the Google Pixel 4 smartphone. The lawsuit alleged that some of the radio personalities providing endorsements of the phone falsely claimed their endorsements were based on personal experience when they had never actually used the phone. In 2022, the states and the FTC reached [a settlement](#) with Google and iHeart that required the companies to pay a total of \$9.4 million to the states, including more than \$1.5 million to Illinois, and to not make misrepresentations about an endorser’s experience.

In 2022, Raoul joined with six other state attorneys general and the Federal Trade Commission to bring a lawsuit against Roomster Corporation and its founders, alleging that they attempted to lure customers seeking affordable housing with fake reviews for their room finder app. In August, the attorneys general and the FTC reached [a settlement](#) with Roomster that prohibits the company from buying or offering incentives for consumer reviews.

Raoul co-led the coalition sending the FTC comment letter with District of Columbia Attorney General Brian Schwalb and Pennsylvania Attorney General Michelle Henry. They are joined in the letter by the attorneys general of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont and Wisconsin.