

From: Jenny Birch [jsbirch@tpg.com.au]
To: laca.reps@aph.gov.au
Subject: Inquiry into Privacy Amendment 11 05 00

Dear Sir

I would like to point out a weakness in the present privacy laws. Many people, myself included, dislike receiving unsolicited phone calls from businesses they have never dealt with and have no immediate desire to know anything about. There are, of course, people who like these calls. I have no objection to them enjoying such calls.

I have approached Telstra and suggested they keep a register of customers who do not welcome advertising and soliciting calls. As their customer, I do not think this is much to ask and in this age of computers it would be easy and cheap to do. Telstra's answer is to have a silent number. That means people with a valid reason to contact me, can not do so if they do not have my number with them. There are many occasions when I use the phone book because I wish to contact someone I know for a valid reason. Indeed often a moderately important reason. Certainly it would be inconvenient if they were not in the phone book.

I am fully aware of the service offered by the Australian Direct Marketing Association. I appreciate what they do but it falls short-

1 It only covers members of ADMA

2 The members update their lists only every three months. If in the mean time, they buy my name on a list from someone else, such as Telstra or Redland Shire Council, I get calls again. (For about a year after I registered with ADMA we had comparative peace, then the calls started thick and fast. When I complained one of the callers even suggested I register with ADMA!

3 Many people are not aware of the ADMA service

Obviously Telstra and Optus make money out of the calls made to the "no" people. The businesses do not, they waste money and earn bad will into the bargain. I am sure they would like more useful lists.

The politicians have made much of the right to privacy we all have. I certainly think it is an invasion of my privacy to be interrupted by someone who is only contacting me because they want to sell me something.

I hope your Committee will be able to act on this matter.

Yours Sincerely

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