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Subject: Privacy Amendment Bill submission

The Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Legal and Constitutional Affairs
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600.

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Submission to the Inquiry into the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector)
Bill 2000

The legislation is skewed in favour of corporations who wish to gather data about people and against citizens who do not wish to become part of intrusive databases.

The minimum safeguard for the citizen is that he or she should be free of these data surveillance techniques unless he or she ticks a box agreeing to them. On every government and commercial form this option could be given. Then we could each 'opt in' if we chose and not have to 'opt out' by contacting dozens or hundreds of collecting agencies.

As it stands the legislation appears to be saying one thing (protection of privacy) and delivering another (the government says it's OK for big companies to collect data on Australians with very few restrictions).

This gap between rhetoric and reality is reminiscent of the notorious and unworkable internet laws for which Senator Alston was justly ridiculed; his hand is apparent here also.

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