



10 September 2012

By email: spla.reps@aph.gov.au

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on
Social Policy and Legal Affairs
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary

Re: Inquiry into the Do Not Knock Register Bill 2012

Following the Committee's queries regarding CHOICE's views on the Do Not Knock Register Bill 2012 (Bill) during the public hearing on Wednesday 22 August, we would like to take the opportunity to indicate our support for the Bill.

CHOICE also supports the submissions made by Consumer Action Legal Centre and Financial Counselling Australia to the Committee.

CHOICE conducted qualitative research in September / October 2011 where respondents expressed high levels of dissatisfaction with the quality of information provided and the high pressure selling techniques employed by door-to-door salespeople selling energy plans. Some responses provided in this research included:

'I need to be able to compare products in an objective place without pressure from salespeople. This is never provided by door-knockers or over the phone in my experience'

'The door-knockers always seem to think I have nothing better to do but listen to their 'big sell'. It is so clear they are money-makers. I do not trust door knockers'

'Not once have I found anything they [telemarketers and door-to-door salespeople] have provided as useful, clear or easy to understand... It's the variables. If 'this' comes into play, then 'that' may happen, unless of course, 'something else' is taking place, in which case — well, you get my drift'

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It is CHOICE's view that effective competition in the energy retail market requires consumers being able to make active and informed decisions. Based on our research, consumers have low levels of confidence in the quality of information provided and have a high level of dissatisfaction with pressure selling techniques employed by direct marketers.

Consumers should have the choice not to be contacted by door-to-door salespeople as they currently do for telemarketers. A well-structured Do Not Knock register may operate as a simple and effective way for consumers to protect themselves from door-to-door marketing.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact CHOICE's Strategic Policy Adviser, Katrina Lee, on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Matt Levey
CHOICE Head of Campaigns

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