



Committee rejects Do Not Knock Register Bill 2012

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs has conducted an inquiry into the Do Not Knock Register Bill 2012 (the Bill) and has tabled its report in Parliament today. The Committee has recommended that the House of Representatives not pass the Bill at this time.

The Bill is a private Member's bill introduced into the House of Representatives on 21 May 2012 by Mr Steve Georganas MP. The Bill proposes a scheme, which would enable individuals to opt out of receiving unsolicited marketing calls to residential and government addresses through a Do Not Knock Register.

The Bill was referred to the Social Policy and Legal Affairs Committee on 24 May 2012. Although the Selection Committee cited only the 'constitutionality of the Bill' as the reason for referral, it became clear that consideration was required regarding the proposed operation of the Bill and its capacity to address its policy intent. Public hearings with consumer advocacy groups, affected industry groups and Mr Steve Georganas MP were held in August.

The Committee received evidence discussing the constitutionality of the Bill and has concluded that it would be inappropriate for it to attempt to advise the Parliament on this aspect of the Bill. The Committee received evidence on the importance of having in place a regulatory framework that protects consumers, particularly the vulnerable, from unscrupulous door to door salespeople. The Committee noted that the recent implementation of the Australian Consumer Law (ACL) framework, campaigns by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), and consumer groups via the Do Not Knock sticker campaign, have been designed to achieve such protections.

Through a consideration of the broader aspects of the Bill, including issues around implementation, the Committee concludes that the consumer protection regime has recently been strengthened, and that further regulation at this stage is premature. Consequently, the Committee recommends that the Bill not pass at this time.

The report is available at www.aph.gov.au/spla. Printed copies will not be available.

For further information please visit the Committee website www.aph.gov.au/spla

For media comment , please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Graham Perrett MP, on (07) 3344 2622 or 0434058200.	
For background information , please contact the Secretariat of the Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs:	
PO Box 6021	Telephone: 02 6277 4969
PARLIAMENT HOUSE	Facsimile: 02 6277 4427
CANBERRA	E-mail: spla.reps@aph.gov.au
ACT 2600	Website: www.aph.gov.au/spla