

We are a resort marketing company based on the Sunshine Coast and employ approx 60 people both full time and casual, most of whom are long term employees. None of our work is outsourced. All work is conducted in Australia on the Sunshine Coast. This financial year our payroll will exceed \$1.5m and we will have sold approx 45,000 discounted holiday packages predominately to the Gold and Sunshine Coasts. We estimate our company brings these regions a conservative \$30m in tourism dollars alone.

The committee would be fully aware how large the telemarketing industry is in Australia, how much money it generates and the number of people it employs. It has reached this size for a very good reason - it works. The majority of people respond to this form of marketing in a positive way because it brings the product to them, it explains it in detail, questions can be answered immediately and substantial discounts can be offered in this form of marketing. Should individuals not be interested they simply say 'no thanks'.

My staff and I are very concerned what the future holds for us with the introduction of this proposed bill. My staff have indicated to me that they believe that the 'witch hunt' aimed at telemarketers is being driven by a minority of the general public and fuelled on a nearly daily basis by a certain morning news show. (An interesting note that when a study came out about the 30 least trusted professions, they made a lot of noise that telemarketers were on the list at number 30 - however they didn't mention that journalists were much higher on the same list). There seems to be no thought for the livelihoods of the telemarketers and the resort and tourism industry we are promoting.

Of great concern to us, is our existing database of loyal clients and clients wishing to be contacted in the future. Our major concern is that a conflict will arise when people that we have contacted previously (who may or may not be existing customers) have indicated that whilst they don't want to purchase anything today, they are happy for us to call them at a later date. These people may register their details on a 'do not call' register because they don't want to be called by a plethora of other telemarketing companies (the anecdotal feedback is that it is overseas call centres that most people object to). However if they have indicated to us that they are happy for us to call them then we would hope that common sense would prevail and that we could fulfil our agreement with them.

Finally, we would actually welcome a 'do not call' list if compiled without the mass hysteria generated by minority groups and media 'beat up'. Just simply allowing people to think for themselves without stampeding them down a particular path.

We also note that charities and political parties will be exempt from these proposed new laws. We believe the tourism industry should also have exemption or at least consideration as a separate case.

Ron Hulsman