

03/26/02
Office of the Secretary
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Room 159
Washington, DC 20580

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to you on behalf of Sycamore Local 3046 to express our objection to the Federal Trade Commission's proposal to amend the Telemarketing Sales Rule. The proposed application of a national "do not call" registry to our organization is unfair, unwise and unworkable.

As fire fighters, we make it our business to serve our communities to the greatest extent possible. Our fire fighter organization is a non-profit entity that relies extensively upon small gifts from a large number of people to support numerous charitable activities. Through such contributions, we have been able to provide annually to all Sycamore Grade Schools, Fire Education/Prevention materials for the children, as well as a newly developed Adult Education Program. CPR/ AED training materials for the public. Annual meals at Christmas time for needy Families in town, ID cards for the staff at a local Outreach program, a couple annual Scholarships for graduating seniors.

Our organization is constantly looking to provide things that will benefit our community such as a "remote control" Fire Hydrant used for fire prevention, book donations to the Sycamore Library and all Sycamore Grade Schools. Other purchases were 2 way radios for all Sycamores' engines, and most recently a TV for our command vehicle for viewing images from a thermal imaging camera.

The proposed rule is unfair because it would create a "do not call" registry maintained by the federal government that would apply to fundraising calls made on behalf of our organization to support our charitable activities, but would not apply to politicians' fundraising calls or phone solicitations by banks, telephone companies and insurance companies. Beyond being unfair, this simply does not make any sense.

The proposed rule is unwise because it would prohibit our organization from contacting individuals on the "do not call" list even if they had consistently donated to our organization in the past and would still like to do so in the future. At a time when government is relying upon non-profits and charities to do more, it should not undermine the ability of organizations such as our own to provide valuable services to the public.

Finally, the proposed rule is unworkable because it violates our First Amendment right to contact members of the public. The Supreme Court has consistently held that any limitations on free speech must be narrowly drawn and use the least intrusive means. This rule satisfies neither of these requirements and further violates the Constitution

because it favors calls from commercial interests, such as banks and insurance companies, over calls made on behalf of non-profits.

Please reconsider this amendment in light of these concerns, and reject the proposal to apply the “do not call” registry to calls made on behalf of non-profit organizations.

Sincerely,

Kurt Mathey
Vice President, Sycamore Firefighters Local 3046