April 15, 2004

Dear Legislator,

I'm writing to voice my serious concerns over the suppression list concepts being talked about in the CAN SPAM act.

It will have a devastating effect on internet commerce. And it will not stop SPAM, it will only stop legitimate emails from reaching people who wanted them in the first place.

As a small businessman, I rely on internet-based products to run my business.

I also subscribe to many newsletters, eZines and updates lists to find out the latest news and information about the new products I need to keep my business profitable.

Email Suppression lists will force many publishers to stop mailing as the burden of complying with the proposed regulations and the liability for making a mistake will simply become to great. This will prevent me from finding out about these products.

I know what information I want. I subscribe to those lists.

I know what information I don't want. If things change, I unsubscribe.

I don't need the government "helping" me when in effect all they are doing is creating a huge burden on publishers.

If I had any faith that this would stop SPAM, that would be one thing.

But the legit publishers already comply with CAN-SPAM and easily let me unsubscribe if I want. That is all automated. It's virtually impossible to automate suppression – a huge problem.

Illegal spammers will simply flout this law. And the real danger is that they can get legit people in trouble by ignoring suppression lists and mailing info on products that consumers have suppressed. Now the innocent merchant of that product can end up with law suits and legal action for something he cannot control.

Clearly, email suppression is fraught with serious technical and implementation problems. *It will only slow down legitimate internet commerce, not spam.*

I urge you to can this part of the CAN-SPAM act as email suppression is, in practicality, a poor idea.

Sincerely,

Jeff Mulligan

P.S. This is the first letter I have ever written to a legislator in my 44 years. That's how strongly I feel about this.