

Southern Poverty Law Center

400 WASHINGTON AVENUE
MONTGOMERY, AL 36104

Joseph J. Levin, Jr.
President

March 26, 2002

Office of the Secretary
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20580

Dear Mr. Secretary,

The Southern Poverty Law Center is against the to the proposal to amend section 1011 of the USA Patriot Act to create a national "Do Not Call" registry: This ruling would seriously hamper our fundraising efforts. We must be allowed to contact our donors by phone and professional fundraisers are the only practical way to do this on a large scale.

The Southern Poverty Law Center is a nonprofit organization founded in 1971. Our mission is to combat hate, intolerance and discrimination through education and litigation. The Center also sponsors the Civil Rights Memorial, which celebrates the memory of those who died during the Civil Rights Movement. We currently support several programs designed to raise the awareness of everyone in our nation about the dangers of hate and intolerance.

On the legal front, the Southern Poverty Law Center has spearheaded several landmark civil rights cases, which include victories against discrimination involving race and sex.

Our Teaching Tolerance program has served over 80,000 schools and reached millions of people since it began. Teaching Tolerance magazine, published twice a year, showcases innovative tolerance initiatives in schools across the country and reaches over 500,000 educators per year.

The Center's Intelligence Project monitors the activities of over 600 identified hate groups across the country. Using information gathered

by the Intelligence Project, the Center provides comprehensive updates to law enforcement agencies and conducts training to agencies around the United States, including the FBI.

Tolerance.org is a Web project that encourages people from all walks of life to fight hate and promote tolerance. Our hope is to awaken people to the problems of hate and intolerance, equip them with the best tolerance ideas, and prompt them to act in their homes, schools, businesses and communities.

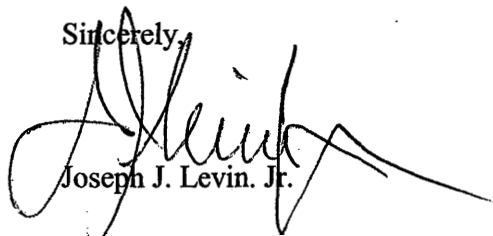
The Southern Poverty **Law** Center receives no Government funding. We rely almost exclusively on the donations of individuals whom we reach through our direct marketing efforts, which include the use of professional telemarketers.

Our current policy is to contact by phone only those people with whom we have a pre-established relationship. We do not call those who ask not to be called and we maintain a comprehensive suppression list within our organization.

As the proposed amendment stands, banks and phone companies would be exempt from the new ruling. Why should those for-profit groups be allowed to call prospective consumers freely? Politicians and religious organizations are also excluded from this constraint. Why? All **non-**profit groups rely on their relationships with their donors and the ability to communicate with them.

The Center's donors are very important to us, because they believe in the work we do and want to see it continue. If they tell us not to contact them, then we will not. But they should tell us, not the government. There should not be a national "Do Not Call" registry, but if there is, do not cripple the fundraising efforts of the nonprofit groups by taking away a vital tool. The nonprofit groups are dedicated to helping the people of our country and we need to be allowed to reach those people. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Levin, Jr.", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Joseph J. Levin, Jr.

JL/wv