



**End those nuisance calls
1 June 2006**

A 'Do Not Call' register to end nuisance calls has moved one step closer with the introduction of legislation into Federal Parliament by Communications Minister Helen Coonan.

Shadow Consumer Affairs Minister Liz Penfold said the register would provide relief for thousands of South Australians from unsolicited telemarketing calls.

"Proprietors of small businesses have contacted me over the years objecting to the inconvenience and expense of answering phone calls that have nothing whatever to do with their businesses," she said.

"Calls often come at a time that can be potentially costly for a tradesman in the middle of a job.

"And I've also been contacted by older people telling me of the difficulty they experience in dealing with some callers," she said.

"Elderly people should not be afraid to answer their own phone."

Mrs Penfold said the register will apply to all telemarketers operating in Australia, as well as overseas telemarketers representing Australian companies. A range of warnings, fines, formal directions and financial penalties will be included.

National minimum standards will be established covering permitted calling hours, information requirements and termination of calls.

Specified public interest bodies will be exempted from the 'Do Not Call' register but will have to comply with the set standards.

Small businesses and individuals will not be required to pay a fee for registering their telephone numbers. Telemarketers will contribute to the costs of running the scheme through the payment of subscription fees to access the register.

In the mean time for those callers who irritate too much, try advising them to hold on for a few minutes and leave the phone off the hook for awhile. They might get the message. ENDS