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March 23, 2007

Senator Janet Cowell
NC Senate
16 W. Jones Street, Room 1028
Raleigh, NC 27601-2808

Dear Senator Cowell:

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on your legislation, S. 591, Option to Stop Delivery of Phone Books. As the industry trade group, the Yellow Pages Association represents publisher members who produce Yellow Pages directories that account for almost 90 percent of the Yellow Pages revenue generated in the U.S. and Canada. We feel that S. 591, while well intentioned, is misguided and unnecessary.

The consumer demand for print directories remains strong. Our research shows that consumers reference printed Yellow Pages products approximately **14.5 billion** times annually. In addition, demand for directories is illustrated by actions such as requests for secondary delivery of directories, sales of additional directories to businesses, and the numbers of directories taken from public distribution stands. Industry analysts are predicting that the printed directory industry will grow over the next five years – proving that our members' products are providing a valuable service to consumers and local businesses alike.

You will be pleased to know that our members have strong relationships with the communities in which they operate, provide good jobs to tens of thousands of Americans, and serve as a marketing partner to millions of small businesses who rely on the directory industry to sustain and grow their businesses. In fact, the majority of the Yellow Pages industry's 3.1 million advertisers are small businesses with limited advertising and marketing budgets. In many cases, their use of print Yellow Pages advertising represents the most significant marketing endeavor they undertake. We believe it would be a great disservice to the small business community throughout North Carolina to limit, or in some cases eliminate, their ability to market their goods and services to the community.

With regard to the environmental impact of directory products, our publishers are proud of their partnerships with local community groups, their recycling programs and their environmental awareness when it comes to the amount of recycled content of the directory.

Directories have a long history of serving the public interest. They contain highly sought and critical information, including emergency services' contacts, emergency preparation guides, methods for contacting elected officials and other government agencies, and other important community information. Directories are also a valuable resource for finding information related to an individual's phone service, including how to avoid the disconnection of telephone service, telephone repair and the telephone service for the disadvantaged.

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Finally, some publishers are affiliated (or under contract) with local telephone companies and, as such, are obligated to fulfill certain state and federal statutory and regulatory requirements pertaining to distribution of directories.

For these reasons, legislation similar to S. 591 that has been introduced in other states has failed. I urge you to reconsider moving S. 591 forward in the legislative process.

Thank you and please do not hesitate to contact me at any time to discuss this issue.

Very truly yours,



Neg Norton

cc: Chairman R.C. Soles, Jr., Vice Chairman David W. Hoyle, Vice Chairman Tony Rand and S. 591
Co-sponsors: Senators Bob Atwater, Doug Berger, Malcolm Graham, Neal Hunt,
Eleanor Kinnaird, Vernon Malone, Martin L. Nesbitt, Jr., John Snow, and Richard Stevens