

A large, thin, yellow arc curves from the top right towards the bottom right of the page. A solid green rectangle is positioned in the top left corner. A thin grey line runs horizontally across the page, intersected by a vertical grey line that extends from the bottom edge. At the intersection of these lines, there is a small yellow square. Another small yellow square is located at the bottom right corner of the green rectangle.

**South Dakota
"Do Not Call" List:
An AARP Survey**

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South Dakota "Do Not Call" List: An AARP Survey

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AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization for people 50 and over. We provide information and resources; advocate on legislative, consumer, and legal issues; assist members to serve their communities; and offer a wide range of unique benefits, special products, and services for our members. These benefits include AARP Webplace at www.aarp.org, *AARP Modern Maturity*, and *My Generation* magazines, the monthly *AARP Bulletin*, and a Spanish-language newspaper, *Segunda Juventud*. Active in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP celebrates the attitude that age is just a number and life is what you make it.

Acknowledgements

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Background

Telephone solicitations have increased greatly over the years, and people often find these calls annoying. Many states have passed statewide "Do not call" list laws to protect consumers from unsolicited telemarketing calls. The federal law is not effective in preventing such calls, as consumers must give a "Do not call" message to each caller on an individual basis.¹

By creating a statewide "Do not call" list, states give consumers the right to have their names placed on a statewide registry that telemarketers must buy before doing business in the state. By law, telephone solicitors cannot call anyone on the list and can be prosecuted if they do so. Most states, however, exempt certain callers from the law, such as charities and nonprofit organizations. Certain types of calls, such as those for ongoing business relationships, are also allowed under most "Do not call" laws.

The present survey measures the opinion of South Dakota AARP members about the establishment of a "Do not call" list in the state. Specifically, this random mail survey of 1,377 members explores:

- Frequency of receiving telemarketing calls and sources of calls
- Impressions of telemarketing calls
- Support for a "Do not call" law in South Dakota
- Priority for legislature to enact a "Do not call" law
- Likelihood of placing one's name on a statewide "Do not call" list

Highlights

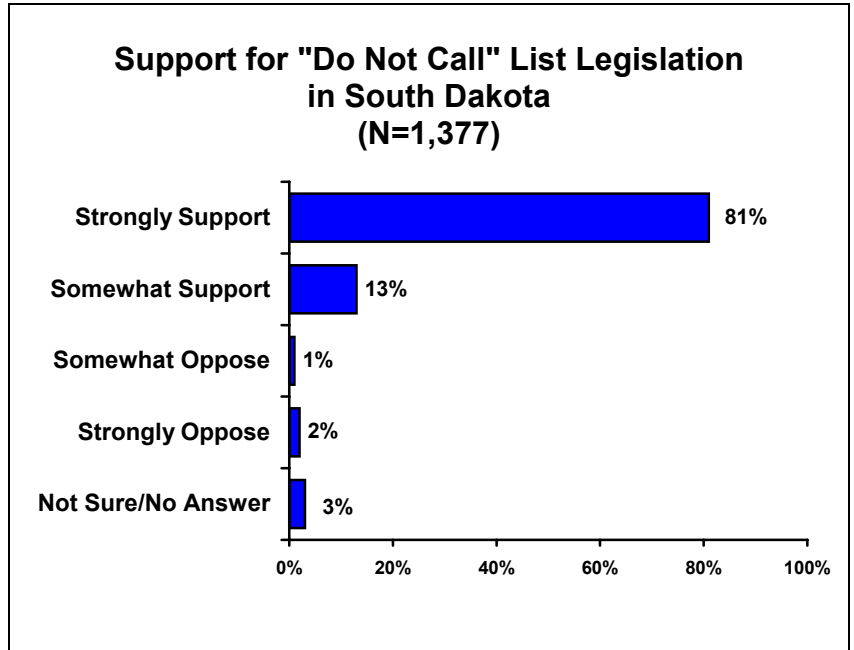
- Over eight in ten (81%) South Dakota members strongly support legislation in South Dakota which would create a "Do not call" list to keep telemarketers from calling them. Another 13 percent would *somewhat* support it.
- About six in ten members would oppose permitting solicitations from companies with whom consumers have an existing business relationship if their name was on a "Do not call" list (44 percent would strongly oppose it, and 14 percent somewhat oppose it).
- Almost all South Dakota members (92%) receive telemarketing calls, which a large majority term "an invasion of privacy and an intrusion in their homes" (80%). Most often, these calls are telephone service (74%) or credit card (72%) solicitations.
- A majority of members say they would take advantage of a "Do not call" law by having their names placed on the statewide list (61% very likely to do so and 19% somewhat likely).

¹ The Federal Trade Commission recently proposed creating a national "Do not call" registry, but it would not be as comprehensive as many state laws, and if adopted, may not be in effect for quite a while.

Findings

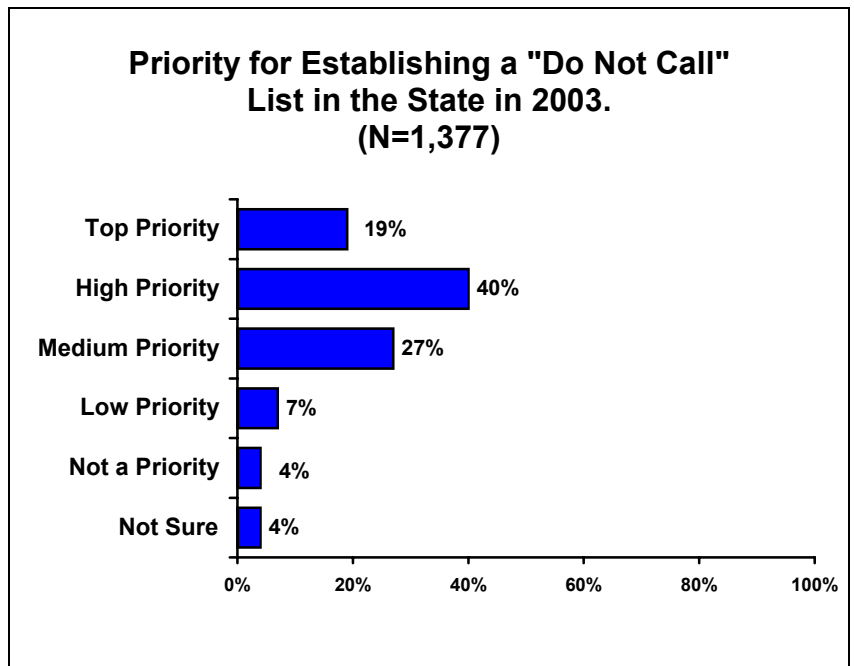
Members overwhelmingly show strong support for a statewide "Do not call" list that would keep telemarketers from calling them.

Most members (81%) strongly support legislation in South Dakota that would create a "Do not call" list to keep telemarketers from calling them. Another 13 percent would somewhat support it. Only three percent are opposed to such a law.



Members want the state of South Dakota to give *at least* high priority to establishing a "Do not call" list in the state in 2003.

Six in ten members (59%) place either top (19%) or high (40%) priority on the governor and legislature in South Dakota establishing a "Do not call" list in 2003. About one in four think this issue is a medium priority, while 11 percent think it is low priority or not a priority.



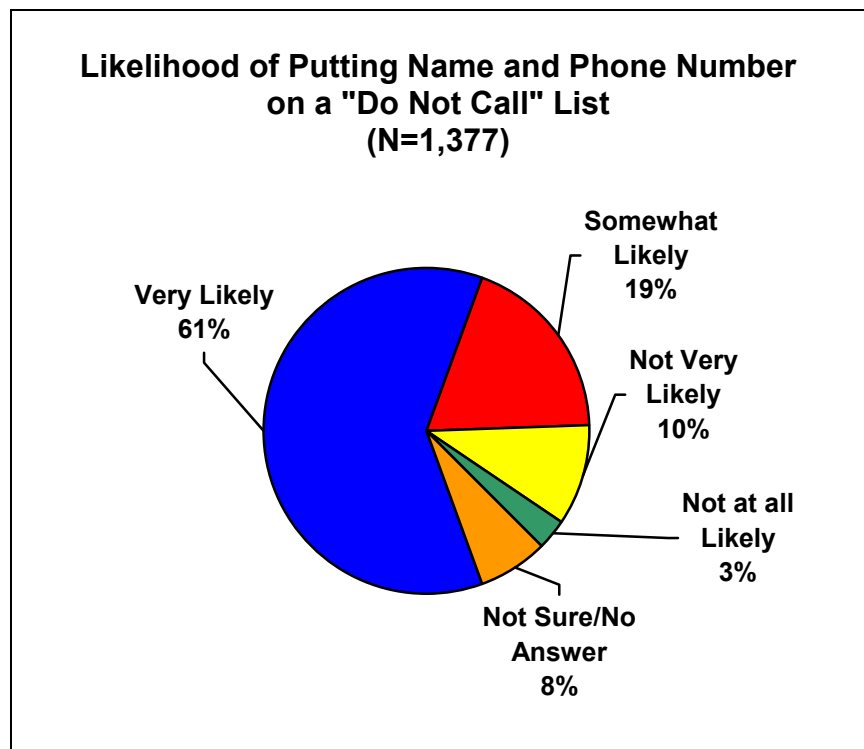
South Dakota members are generally opposed to allowing exceptions to a "Do not call" law to permit businesses with which they have an existing relationship to call them to sell additional products and services.

In some states, "Do not call" laws allow organizations such as telephone companies, credit card companies, and financial institutions, with whom one has an ongoing business relationship, to call to sell additional products and services even if one's name is on the list. Over half of members would be opposed to this provision (44% strongly opposed and 14% somewhat opposed). About one in three would support such a provision (19% strongly support it and 17% somewhat support it.)

A large majority of members are very or somewhat likely to have their names placed on a "Do not call" list.

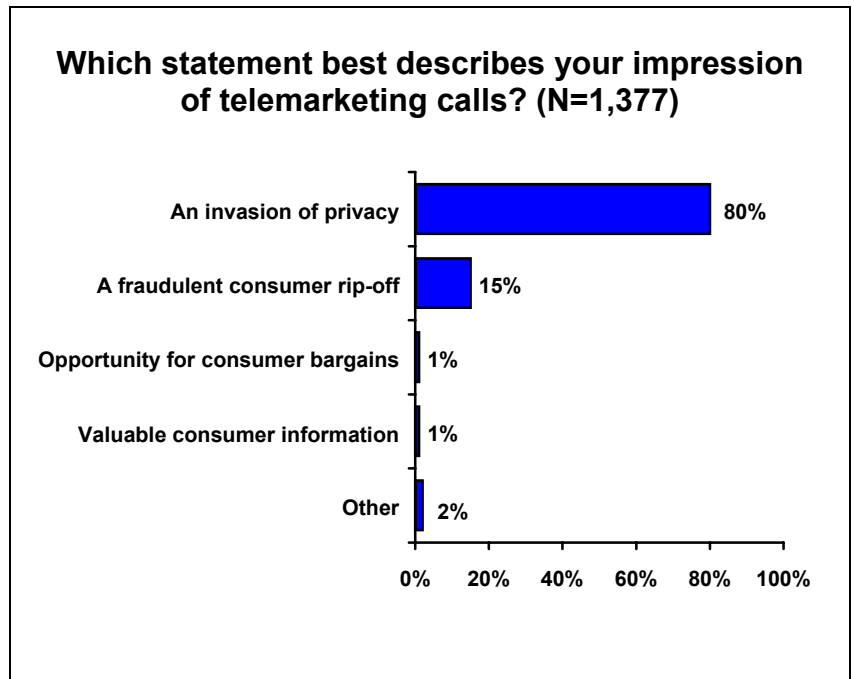
Six in ten members say they would be very likely to have their names and phone numbers placed on a "Do not call" list, and another two in ten would be somewhat likely to do so.

Thirteen percent would not be likely to put their names on a list (10% not very likely and 3% not at all likely).



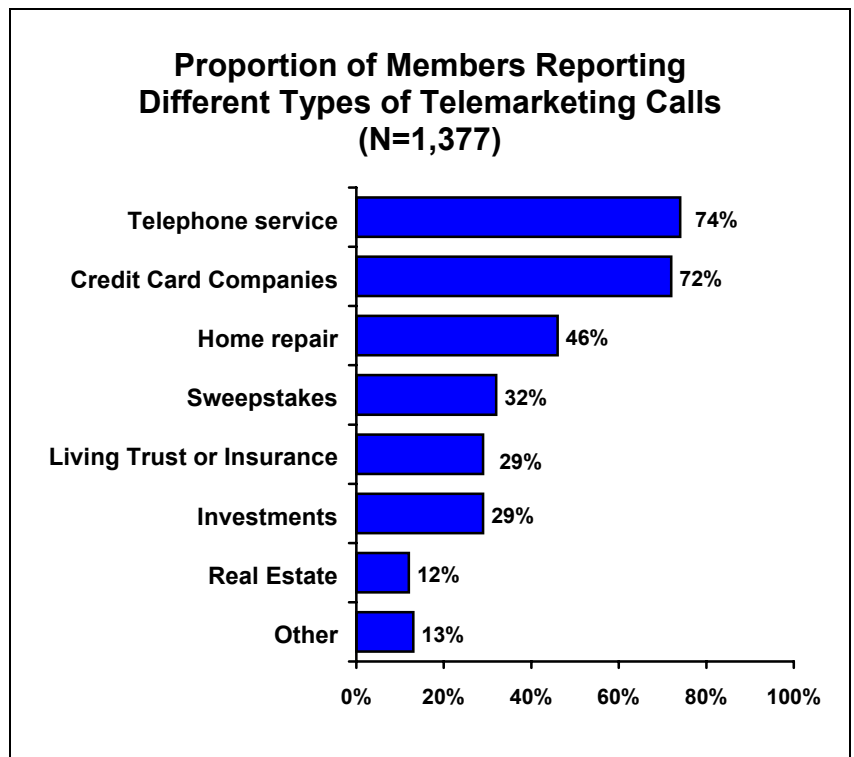
South Dakota members think telemarketing calls are an invasion of privacy and an unwelcome intrusion in their homes.

When asked how they would best characterize telemarketing calls, the majority of members (80%) describe them as "an invasion of privacy and an unwelcome intrusion." Others call them a "fraudulent consumer rip-off" (15%). Just two percent describe telemarketing calls in more favorable terms.



South Dakota members receive frequent telemarketing calls, most often from telephone companies and credit card companies.

Most members in the state (77%) receive at least one call per week where the caller asks them to buy something, enter a sweepstakes, make an investment, or make a donation. About one-quarter (23%) receives more than five calls. Members report that calls come most often from telephone companies (74%) and credit card companies (72%), although almost half (46%) report getting calls for home repair service.



Over four in ten South Dakota members have requested that a business remove their name from their solicitation list. A third of these say they were called back anyway.

Forty-four percent of members report that they have asked telemarketing callers to remove their names from the calling list. Of these, about one-third (34%) report that the business did not heed their request, and they were called back by the same business. An equal proportion (36%) cannot be sure whether or not the business ever called them back.

Conclusions

As in other states, support is extremely high among AARP members for the establishment of a "Do not call" law in South Dakota; it is strongly supported by 81 percent. Unwanted telemarketing calls are something that members deal with on a daily, if not weekly basis, and few have been successful at stopping the calls through their own efforts. Members in the state are further inclined to support a more limiting version of a "Do not call" law which would not permit exemptions for companies with whom consumers have ongoing business relationships.

If and when such legislation is enacted in South Dakota, most members say they would take advantage of it by having their names placed on the statewide "Do not call" list (61% very likely to do so and 19% somewhat likely). The level of member support for a "Do not call" law is reflected in the proportion who give top or high priority to getting this law enacted in 2003: Two in ten say it is a top priority and four in ten say it is a high priority.

Methodology

In June, 2002, AARP conducted a mail survey of AARP members in South Dakota. From a random sample of 2,000 selected from AARP's membership database, a total of 1,377 completed questionnaires were returned by the survey cut-off date of July 2, 2002, yielding a 69 percent response rate. Each respondent was contacted four times: a pre-notification postcard, the survey itself, a reminder postcard, and a second survey.

The survey has a sampling error of plus or minus 2.6 percent. This means that in 95 out of 100 samples of this size, the results obtained in the sample would fall in a range of ± 2.6 percentage points of what would have been obtained if every South Dakota member had been surveyed. Survey responses were weighted to reflect the distribution of age in the membership population of South Dakota. Weighted responses to all survey questions are in the attached annotated questionnaire.

For more information about this study, contact Anita Stowell-Ritter, AARP Knowledge Management, (202) 434-6205.

Annotated Questionnaire

2002 AARP South Dakota Telemarketing Survey

DIRECTIONS: For each survey item below, check the box that best represents your opinion.

1. Thinking about telephone calls that you receive where a caller from an organization asks you to buy something, enter a sweepstakes or contest, make an investment, or make a donation to charity, about how many times did you get these kinds of calls in the past week?

<u>%</u>	
16	Less than 1 a week
54	1-5
15	6-10
5	11-15
3	More than 15
6	Never or rarely get these calls
2	No Answer

2. Have you received telemarketing calls about any of the following areas in the past six months? Please check an answer for each area. (Multiple response)

	<u>%</u>
a. Real estate	12
b. Home repair	46
c. Sweepstakes/prizes	32
d. Living trust or insurance	29
e. Credit card	72
f. Investments	29
g. Telephone service	74
h. Other	13
No Answer	0

3. Would you **support** or **oppose** a “do-not-call” law in South Dakota that would give you the option of placing your name on a statewide list so that telemarketers would be prohibited from calling you?

<u>%</u>	
81	Strongly support
13	Somewhat support
1	Somewhat oppose
2	Strongly oppose
3	Not sure
1	No answer

4. Some “do not call” laws allow organizations such as telephone companies, credit card companies, and financial institutions that you have an ongoing business relationship with to call you even if your name is on the list. Would you **support** or **oppose** allowing these organizations to call you at home to sell you additional products and services if your name is on the “do not call” list?

<u>%</u>	
17	Strongly support
19	Somewhat support
14	Somewhat oppose
44	Strongly oppose
6	Not sure
1	No answer

5. Which of the following statements best describes your impressions of telephone contacts from organizations that ask you to buy something, enter a sweepstakes or contest, or make an investment? Check the **one** statement that best describes your impression.

<u>%</u>	
1	A valuable source of consumer information
1	A great opportunity to take advantage of consumer bargains
80	An invasion of your privacy and an unwelcome intrusion
15	A fraudulent consumer rip-off
2	Or something else (Specify: _____)
2	Don't know/No answer

6. Have you requested that a business or organization remove your name from their solicitation list?

<u>%</u>	
44	Yes
48	No
7	Not Sure
1	No answer



6b. After you requested them to remove your name from their list, did the business call you back? (*N=604 respondents who requested their names be removed.*)

<u>%</u>	
34	Yes
27	No
36	Not Sure
3	No answer

7. How likely are you to have your name and telephone number placed on a “do not call” list?

<u>%</u>	
61	Very likely
19	Somewhat likely
10	Not very likely
3	Not at all Likely
7	Not sure
1	No answer

8. How much of a priority do you think it should be for the governor and legislature to establish a “do not call” list in 2003?

<u>%</u>	
19	Top priority
40	High priority
27	Medium priority
7	Low priority
4	Not a priority at all
3	Not sure
1	No answer

About You

The following questions are for classification purposes only and will be kept entirely confidential.

9. Are you male or female?

<u>%</u>	
45	Male
54	Female

10. What is your age as of your last birthday? Mean=67 (**in years**)

<u>%</u>	
28	50-59
42	60-74
25	75+
5	No answer

11. What is your current marital status?

<u>%</u>	
66	Now married
21	Widowed
8	Divorced
*	Separated
4	Never married
1	No answer

12. What is the highest level of education that you completed?

<u>%</u>	
8	Less than high school
28	High school graduate or equivalent
35	Some college or technical training beyond high school
14	College graduate (4 years)
14	Post-graduate or professional degree
1	No answer

13. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

<u>%</u>	
27	Employed or self-employed <u>full-time</u>
13	Employed or self-employed <u>part-time</u>
55	Retired and not working
4	Other such as homemaker
1	Unemployed and looking for work
1	No answer

14. Are you Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino?

<u>%</u>	
1	Yes
96	No
3	No answer

15. What is your race?

<u>%</u>	
97	White or Caucasian
*	Black or African American
*	Asian
1	Native American or Alaskan Native
0	Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
1	No answer

16. What is your five-digit zip code? (WRITE IN YOUR ZIP CODE.) _____

* Percentage is less than 1%.

17. How would you describe the place you live now - a city, a suburban area around a city, a small town, or in the country.

<u>%</u>	
39	City
5	Suburb
38	Small town
18	Country
1	No answer

18. What was your annual household income before taxes in 2001?

<u>%</u>	
8	Less than \$10,000
15	\$10,000 to \$19,999
15	\$20,000 to \$29,999
14	\$30,000 to \$39,999
10	\$40,000 to \$49,999
14	\$50,000 to \$74,999
10	\$75,000 or more
13	No answer

Thank you for completing this survey. Please use the postage-paid envelope and return it to the State Member Research Surveys, AARP, 601 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20049 by July 2, 2002.

AARP
Knowledge Management
For more information contact Anita Stowell-Ritter (202) 434-6205