

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am your constituent. I am also a promotional products professional. I and others in my industry play an important role in the Indiana economy – collectively we provide more than 5,700 jobs, represent 619 companies and contribute more than \$110 million to the state economy annually.

I am very concerned that certain statements you recently have made will have a profoundly negative impact on my business.

You added an amendment to the COMPETES Act that reads:

“No funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or the amendments made by this Act may be used to purchase gift items, knickknacks, souvenirs, trinkets, or other items without direct educational value.”

You also contributed an amendment to the Home Star Energy Retrofit program that read:

“The public education campaign shall not include any distribution of gift items, knickknacks, tchotchkes, devices, or other items without direct educational value”

While I too am against waste of government resources, you may not realize that promotional products do play an important role in making the public aware of important initiatives and are essential elements in successful marketing programs.

The promotional products industry is much more than a collection of logoed items. These products when carefully and thoughtfully selected are the best way to reach the consumer in a memorable and personal manner. These items are retained by the recipient and reinforce marketing messages with every interaction.

I am aware you have objected to the use of promotional products during the census this year. Because the US census expanded their marketing efforts to include promotional products in addition to print, broadcast, mobile and outdoor advertising, the response rates are projected to be more thorough and more accurate.

The U.S. Census Bureau stated that “If increasing mail response were the only goal, the effort would focus on those people most likely to answer the census and persuade them to mail back their questionnaires...But the goals of improving accuracy and reducing the differential undercount are equally important. Achieving these goals will require added emphasis and targeting for hard-to-count audiences and **will not necessarily yield a cost savings for census operations but will result in a more accurate count.**”

The U.S. Census Bureau deliberately added promotional products, and other alternative media, to the marketing mix to personalize the census process recognizing the effectiveness of promotional products in cutting through the clutter of the marketing mix to personally connect with the recipient.

You do my industry, my business and your constituents a disservice by portraying promotional products as “ineffective and wasteful spending.”

I call on you to immediately stop offering amendments of this sort to bills.

Thank you.