



Association of Directory Publishers

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## San Francisco Coalition Press Release

May 11, 2011

To: All North American Members

Fr: Larry

Re: Industry Statement in Aftermath of Vote

Below please find a copy of the Coalition's media response to yesterday's passage of the opt-in ordinance in San Francisco.

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

#### **Coalition Fears That San Francisco Ban on Yellow Pages Hurts Labor, Small Businesses, Seniors, Ethnic Community and Economy**

#### **Coalition Asks Supervisors to Reconsider Vote, Urge Mayor to Save Jobs by Vetoing Ban on Yellow Pages**

**SAN FRANCISCO – (MAY 10, 2011)** – Today's vote by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to ban Yellow Pages will put hundreds of San Francisco residents out of work, restrict small businesses' ability to reach customers, and disenfranchise seniors, as well as Hispanic, Chinese and LGBT communities.

"We share with many cities the common goal of eliminating unwanted directory delivery, but we disagree with an ordinance that effectively bans Yellow Pages, costs jobs and hurts consumers," said Neg Norton, president, Local Search Association. "This is a slap in the face to San Francisco's 115,000 small

businesses, the Hispanic, Chinese and LGBT communities, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and seniors.”

Yellow Pages companies have made proactive efforts to provide consumers with the ability to reduce or stop delivery of phone books. The industry’s official site at [www.yellowpagesoptout.com](http://www.yellowpagesoptout.com) offers a single, centralized hub for consumers nationwide to submit delivery requests. This site will accomplish what the San Francisco Board of Supervisors seeks to achieve, without jeopardizing San Francisco’s fragile economy.

“The government should not decide which forms of media have value or work best for advertisers or consumers. When the government dictates which media will or will not be allowed, all media are threatened,” said Norton on behalf of the industry.

Immediate negative impacts after today’s vote to ban the Yellow Pages in San Francisco include:

- Small businesses’ ability to use print Yellow Pages to generate new customers and sales will be harmed, putting storefronts and workers at risk. Many small businesses do not have an online presence, or find that Internet advertising isn’t the only solution they need to drive traffic.
- Directories oriented to targeted markets – including Spanish-speaking, Chinese-speaking, and LGBT communities – would be limited in the distribution models available to them.
- The business of publishing and distributing Yellow Pages employs thousands of people in and around San Francisco. These jobs are now at risk during a period of high unemployment.
- Onerous opt-in requirements make the cost of home distribution nearly impossible for publishers, eliminating the availability of directories to anyone that wants them and increasing the difficulty of obtaining a directory for those who need them.
- A significant inconvenience to the seven in ten adults who used print directories last year.

“It is unfortunate that the Board of Supervisors relied upon myths about the industry’s environmental impact, production processes, financial impact on the community, advertiser ROI and usage statistics. It is also unfortunate that they failed to honor the First Amendment rights of publishers, advertisers and residents of the City,” said Norton. “We will continue to oppose any attempt to single out the Yellow Pages industry and will be working with supervisors and the Mayor’s office to ensure that the truth about this ill-conceived ordinance becomes known.

“The Board of Supervisors has also failed to provide the public with accurate information on potential tax and revenue losses to the city as a result of the

legislation, including the decrease in recycling revenues from the city's curbside recycling program or the cost to taxpayers of a court battle over the Constitutionality of such a law."

The industry remains committed to honoring stop-delivery requests from consumers immediately via [www.yellowpagesoptout.com](http://www.yellowpagesoptout.com), and working with San Francisco residents, and consumers across the country.

The Coalition is made up of publishers, small businesses, labor and consumer groups.