

October 21, 2005

Federal Trade Commission/Office of the Secretary
Room 135-H (Annex F)
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580

RE: Competitive Policy and the Real Estate Industry Workshop

To whom it may concern:

The real estate market is more competitive today than it has ever been. Our company was established in 1938 and at no time has it been more competitive than today. We have more agents in our local association and more business models than ever. We have all agreed to cooperate through our local association and the MLS System.

The MLS is a cooperative, broker-to-broker offer of cooperation and compensation that help both brokers and customers buy and sell homes. It is not a public utility, nor should it be.

The beauty of the MLS is that it allows real estate brokerages of every size to compete on a level playing field. It gives all of us access to an inventory of property listings that we are able to show and sell to our clients.

The MLS doesn't discriminate. All MLS members are treated equally, regardless of their size or their business model, and yet the rights of property owners and their listing brokers are respected. The rules of the MLS achieve a delicate balance between respecting the rights of listing brokers so they will continue to be willing to contribute their inventory of listings and permitting cooperating brokers the ability to show those listings and be assured of receiving compensation if they bring about a successful sale.

We appreciate your attentiveness to our industry but feel that it is unjustified. Name another industry where the fiercest of competitors also cooperate like the real estate industry.

Sincerely,

Jeff Kolbus, V.P.