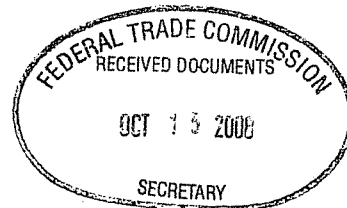


ORIGINAL

From: Lyons-Pruitt, Lawanda [Lpruitt@co.santa-barbara.ca.us]
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2008 4:23 PM
To: 'FRANCIE KOEHLER'
Cc: Lyons-Pruitt, Lawanda
Subject: Letter Re Proposed Consent Order



Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Red Category

Re: Proposed Consent Order
In the Matter of Reed Elsevier and Choice Point, FTC File No. 081-0133

Dear Mr. Clark:

I'm writing with respect to the proposed Consent Order and acquisition of Choice Point by Reed Elsevier. This Office is comprised of investigators, who provide critical services to clients, other governmental agencies and attorneys. We rely extensively on services provided by both Reed Elsevier and Choice Point and their subsidiaries to assist us in serving these clients.

Over the past several years there has been tremendous consolidation among providers of public records services. This proposed acquisition will further reduce competition in the industry. Although there are several providers of data services in the marketplace, they are resellers of data provided by the respondents.

The Commission's complaint found that this acquisition would be anticompetitive and a violation of antitrust law in the market for the sale of public records information to law enforcement agencies. The same effects would be felt in the market for sale of public records to the private sector.

It is important to have access to data from several suppliers when conducting investigation. Limited resources reduce both the quality and quantity of information available. Our office doesn't have the financial weight to bargain effectively with large entities in a non-competitive environment.

The Commission should NOT approve the acquisition until respondents can divest themselves of public records services provided to private industry as well as to law enforcement.

Unless an appropriate remedy is offered, solo private investigators and all clients will suffer irreparable harm. When competition is reduced, incentives for

innovation is reduced, prices rise and service suffers.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

Lawanda Lyons-Pruitt
Chief Investigator
Santa Barbara County Public Defender
(805)-346-7510
(805)-560-1021