

My letter to the FTC

I am writing this letter because I am concerned about the proposed Business Opportunity Rule R511993. I would ask that you please consider my comments in regards to my direct sales business through The Pampered Chef and the significance of these proposed changes to our business.

Though I understand that this business is not for everyone, it is structured and priced in such a way that everyone has the opportunity to try, and to no loss. Being and ex restaurant owner and my husbands family owning a dry cleaning business for over 40 years, we understand the risk involved in owning your own business, the excessive hours and struggles, just trying to survive in a dog eat dog world. The direct sales industry has given me the ability to still "own" my own business and satisfy my entrepreneur nature while assuming no risk. I have a company behind me that plans, strategizes, inquires, investigates and keeps my product line innovative and at no loss of income to me. Though I am not one of the top dogs, the highest paid, my direct sales business has always paid for the extra's that my family needed...the vacations(some of which were free, compliments of my direct sales job) the school clothes, the piano, voice, dance, gymnastic, football, basketball, baseball, private school, soccer, children's theater classes, summer camps and swimming lessons fees and the groceries to hold us over until the next payday when our family was young. My children were able to be involved in children's theater and learn all the great lessons that it teaches. They could travel to perform for boys and girls clubs in the summer and provide entertainment for the less fortunate, because Mom could sit in the back and "work on her business" while she waited.

My growing family has never collected one thin dime in any government agency....Because we were rich?...No, but because my direct sales business provided the extra that we needed. As the food bank coordinator in my area I have had the opportunity to assist with programs in my area, and my children have as well and learned the lessons that come from that, because of my association with The Pampered Chef. We may not have always had everything...but we have always had everything that we needed and the income from my business has helped provide it all.

We the direct sales Mom's(and some Dad's as well) are the ones in great force that are still baking the cookies for school, and chaperoning the field trips. I am making the sandwiches after school for the football team, so that kids who's parents are off at work in corporate America will not go unfed before the game. We are the one's keeping an eye on everyone else's teens as they grow and learn and are tempted by the evils that befall them in this world. We are raising kids that have learned about goal setting from watching direct sales parents work hard at goals AND MEETING them. We are raising kids that understand that the American dream is possible...not by a hand out, but by consistent hard work. These kids are the ones with the skill and confidence to be whatever they want to be, kids who will be part of the solution and not part of the problem. Because Mom's and Dad's decided to work hard at a home based business along side their job as parent and do BOTH jobs to the best of their ability. And yes, in this house it is Mom AND Dad, because Dad also supports my business and helps where needed when he is not at work. Not to brag, and I know that anything can happen, but as a Mom of 4...we have just watched the oldest present her dissertation and receive her PHD in Math, another just graduate from High School and aspires to be a great Chef, child number 3, who plans to entertain society and teach children an appreciation of the Arts and perform on a stage in Broadway...and child # 4 just cannot quiet make up his 15 year old mind as to whether he wants to be an OBGYN or a Orthopedic Surgeon....he loves babies, but also is a gentle soul and loves the elderly as well.

Would things have been the same had I not been home everyday, working my job as Mom along side my direct sales job?...who knows...but I do know that if you ask

any one of them ..”How to eat an elephant”...they know the answer is “one bite at a time”....Whatever they do, they know how to set a goal and work it in little pieces. They also know, that success is only measured by the journey and the mark you leave on mankind. This I have been able to pass on because of what I have learned in my direct sales business.

In consideration of the proposed ruling that a seven day waiting period be required to enroll a new consultant, this would have such a negative impact on the growth of our individual businesses. We offer a \$90 kit with over \$350 in value, there is no way to lose on this deal...Even if the purchaser does not succeed with the business, they are left with a great amount of wonderful kitchen tools that far exceed the value of the purchase price. I understand that part of the FTC’s responsibilities is to protect the public from “unfair and deceptive acts or practices,” and I understand that there are companies out there in direct sales, just like any other industry, that do not conduct their business in an ethical manner and they should be dealt with individually. But do not disrupt business for those of us, who run an honest home based business and sell a terrific product of good value, and rely on the income that it produces just to correct the errors of a few . It is sort of throwing the baby out with the bath water. Is it not ultimately the responsibility of the investor to perform their due diligence in looking into the back ground of the company that they are going to invest in. Most direct sales companies are a good thing, offering many the opportunity of an income without risk.

In regards to giving them a list of those that failed, not only would this be a gross invasion of the privacy of our consultants and customers which we work hard to protect, I feel that it would only be a discouragement to those that might have what it takes to succeed. In my 11 years with The Pampered Chef, I have seen many come and go, that did not succeed, but that was of no fault of the company. It was generally that they just did not take full advantage of the opportunity presented, just as those in our country do not always take advantage of the education that is afforded them, yet we cannot discourage those that want to try by sticking it in their face the failure rate of those that did not graduate, or did not receive a degree. Should we present college freshman with a list of those that failed, and did not graduate, and ask them to consider this information before they commit to an education? This would have a tremendously negative impact on enrollment and in the 7 days that they waited, most would probably decide to never even try. It should be understood that you cannot succeed, if you do not work. I believe and am witness to the fact that The Pampered Chef has afforded me as much success as I have been willing to work for and each new consultant that I “recruit” is told that as well. There are no secrets, no hidden facts, it is simple...you work hard, you get paid. If I have to show them a report that shows all those that failed, they may be discouraged and never get the opportunity to have all that my family has enjoyed.

Please hear the voice of those of us that are in the business, understand that we are a great work force that does not need to be disrupted, and concentrate your efforts and the job that you do so well on those companies that are not operating on the level, I am sure you can find them with great ease. Just ask around, most people already know who they are.

**Thank You ,
Cheri Stigler
Independent Sales Director
For The Pampered Chef**