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Coleman Wants Consumers Warned of Tracking Devices

See www.missourihelp.com/coleman/rfid.html for detailed information

Jefferson City, Mo – Because radio frequency identification devices (RFID) are not regulated in the state of Missouri, Senator Maida Coleman (D-St. Louis) has sponsored SB 638 that would warn consumers the tracking devices are in the products they buy.

RFIDs are tiny chips about half the size of a grain of sand that are connected to miniature antennae. The devices contain unique identification numbers and can be sewn into a clothes seam or molded into plastic and rubber.

Increasingly, big retailers and manufacturers like Wal-Mart, Gillette and Target use the technology for inventory tracking, reducing theft and keeping items in stock. The devices, however, can be tracked from a distance and marketers, retailers and the federal government are interested in using them to track individuals.

“RFIDs are very valuable tools, but like any new technology they can be abused,” Senator Coleman said. “I am concerned that RFIDs will be used to invade our privacy by providing information about who we are, where we go and what we do.”

A recent Government Accounting Office report stated: “Among the key privacy issues are notifying individuals of the existence or use of the technology; tracking an individual's movements; profiling an individual's habits, tastes or predilections; and allowing for secondary uses of information.”

“The technology is amazing, but we need to come up with rational solutions that keep the lives of our citizens as private as they want them to be,” Senator Coleman said. “I do not want to ban the use of RFIDs; I only want to make consumers aware of their presence.”

Senator Coleman’s online office at missourihelp.com/coleman.html contains detailed information about RFIDs.

“It’s important for consumers to visit this site,” Senator Coleman said.
