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State may offer name-selling out

The licensing agency says it has offered lists of professionals for 30 years.

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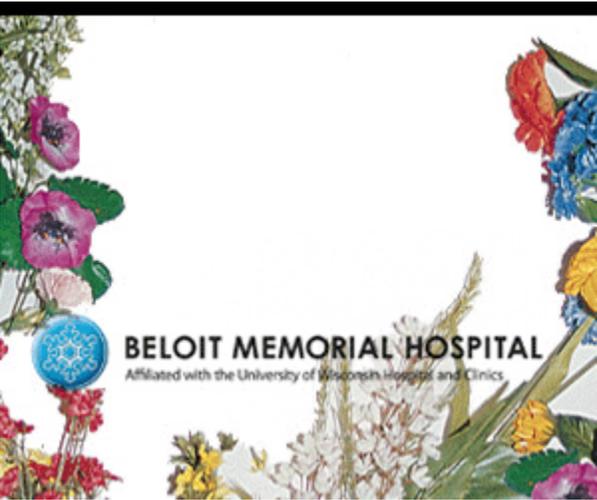
By **Aaron Chambers**
RRSTAR.COM

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SPRINGFIELD — If you're a doctor or other professional licensed with the state, don't be surprised if a marketing firm finds you.

The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, which regulates more than 100 professions, from acupuncturists to security contractors, sells its database of names to marketing companies.

"It sounds like it might be a little shady, but the argument on the other side is, 'Would you rather be taxed?'" said Chris Mooney, a political studies professor at the



University of Illinois at Springfield. "It's a way of making money."

Agency spokeswoman Sue Hofer said the practice has been in place for at least 30 years. She said names of regulated professionals are public and that the agency therefore must disclose them upon request.

The agency charges a fee to cover only "the actual cost of producing the roster," she said. The cost for a list is \$65 per profession, plus \$2.50 per 1,000 names, she said.

"If you were to buy the cosmetology roster, you're looking at 150,000 names," she said. "The run time for that kind of computer search would be significantly longer than for 1,000 names."

Rep. Angelo "Skip" Saviano, an Elmwood Park Republican and chairman of the House Registration and Regulation Committee, said he has never heard any complaints from regulated individuals or trade associations about the agency's practice of selling names.

However, he said he might be open to legislation giving professionals the option to remove their names from such lists intended for marketing. He said he would first consult with professional associations.

"We could probably do like a 'do not call list,' where a licensed professional who doesn't want to be included in these data packages would be able to option out," he said. "Obviously, they're going to be solicited by a vendor to buy their piece of medical equipment if they're a doctor or whatever."

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