

## There Ought to Be a Law

*By Dennis Knight*

“Your call is important to us..., we value your business..., your call will be answered in the order in which it was received,” a few bars of the same song, and puffery about the company, all repeating in a loop. Nothing is worse than going into the queue, or as we victims call it, being put on terminal hold.

I now propose a law that will forbid outright the practice of putting customers into a queue, or in the alternative, I offer a system of fines for using a call waiting system with a loop telling us over and over again to hold our horses. My law would also require every chief executive in America to regularly and anonymously call their own customer service lines to experience the torture his or her organization is currently perpetrating. This will apply but not be limited to all merchants, bankers, gadget makers, and the Postmaster General.

A couple of weeks ago I ran into a problem setting up my new blu-ray player to fulfill its promise of streaming movies and programs from Netflix, You Tube and other providers of mindless drivel. After the man on the help line spent some time tripping over the question and putting me on hold several times (always with the loop) to consult his script, I was eventually advised that Samsung’s servers were down for maintenance, and I should try again in twenty-four hours.

You can imagine how I resented that assault on my need for instant gratification. “That is unacceptable,” I informed the agent, who spoke in broken English from some remote corner of the globe. I insisted on speaking to a supervisor. In the vernacular of customer service that meant I was demanding to be ‘escalated’, and my call was routed off to corporate.

I then found myself on a new terminal hold, this time without the loop of platitudes and commercials. Not even bad music. I waited in silence for thirty minutes before I heard a couple of clicks, and a machine finally kicked in to announce how important my call was, and implored me to please call back during normal business hours. I had wasted more than a half an hour of my Saturday morning on Samsung; time I could have been exploring streams of mindless drivel. I hung up uttering my own satisfying expression of drivel, profane *and* mindless.

I had no intention of waiting twenty four hours for another bout of bad customer service, so I simply restarted the installation process and, magically, someone had rebooted Samsung’s servers and the installation of my new blu-ray device went without a hitch in something less than a minute.

This episode has inspired me to offer a law for the betterment of mankind. Telling you about it has lifted my spirits, and compels me to sing, celebrate and close with the worst pun I have ever committed, “Samsung Blu, Everybody Knows One.”