

Legislation Needed for Service Personnel

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Would you allow a stranger or a sex offender into your home?

That was the question put before the sisters of the Laureate Alpha Gamma Chapter of the Beta Sigma Phi sorority by Lucia Bone on March 9.

She followed that question up by asking, then why should you allow a service provider to send someone like that to your home?

Bone is the founder of the Sue Weaver CAUSE (Consumer Awareness of Unsafe Service Employment), which she founded in 2004 in memory of her sister, Sue Weaver.

Weaver was tied up, raped and beaten to death in her home on Aug. 27, 2001, by a twice-convicted sex offender who'd been contracted to clean the air ducts in her home six months earlier. After killing Weaver, he then set fire to the residence.

"I want to bring awareness to consumer and service providers about the importance of criminal background checks on anyone who comes to or into our homes to do service work," Bone said.

"Criminals are using their occupations to find their victims, and they will continue to make house calls until we stop them."

She said that, according to information published in The Wichita Eagle, Dennis Rader, the BTK suspect from Wichita, Kan., was an ADT Security employee from 1974-88 and routinely had access to people's homes.

Burdines, the department store Weaver had called about cleaning her air ducts, had contracted the work out to a third party, and although Burdines did background checks on all of its in-store employees, it did not require them of contracted employees.

There is currently legislation in Texas, Florida and Georgia that will require service employers to do background checks on employees.

Eventually, Bone hopes that every state will adopt similar legislation.

"Even if we have to go one state at a time, I think we'll accomplish our goal. It's like the Amber Alert. It's a no-brainer," Bone said.

"You wouldn't hire a burglar to work in a bank, and you wouldn't hire a drug addict to work in a pharmacy."

However, Bone is quick to add, "Legislation is only as good as the paper it's written on, so CAUSE wants to bring awareness (to the issue)."

There is also work being done on legislation on a national level, she said.

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