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## The Better Business Bureau Gets an "F" Rating – Why Their Fraudulent 'Pay-To-Play' Rating System Is Totally Irrelevant

Posted by [Bryan Ellis](#) on Saturday, November 13th 2010

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The Better Business Bureau (BBB) is a scam, and hundreds of thousands of unfairly targeted small business owners have known it for years. Now, new publicly available evidence confirms that suspicion for the rest of the world, too.

The original "complaint forum", the BBB has long represented itself as the impartial moderator of business disputes. Consumers with complaints about businesses would lodge their complaints with the BBB, and the BBB would send a letter to the business. If the targeted business responded to BBB's satisfaction, then no damaging report would be made. But if the BBB was dissatisfied with the targeted business's response, BBB would gladly provide that information to anyone who asked for it, and attach a rating of "A" through "F" depending on BBB's own biases.

Many businesses live or die on their BBB rating. This is ridiculous, since the BBB has no actual authority whatsoever. Yet, for some reason, the public has long considered the BBB to be a reliable indicator of the experiences of the public with particular companies.

Now, the truth – long suspected by so many small businesses – is out. According to Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal [1], the BBB's rating system ("A" through "F", like a report card) can be manipulated by offering financial incentives directly to the BBB.

Example: One small company – Bayless Custom Homes – had an "F" rating with the BBB. Owner Gary Bayless had never been informed of the one complaint that led to the rating. Bayless says he contacted the BBB about the issue, and

they agreed to change the grade to B+, or to an "A" if Bayless would join the BBB organization, which includes the requirement that Bayless pay the BBB.

Example #2: Deciding to test the theory of BBB irrelevancy, some L.A. business owners created a fake business name - Hamas, after the terrorist organization - and submitted a membership application to BBB [2]. This fake business doesn't exist and has never done business. Yet the BBB saw fit to give it a rating of "A-" with no more justification than the \$425 application fee.

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The Better Business Bureau is an irrelevant, antiquated and probably fraudulent organization. **It's time that the BBB gets an F rating.**

- [1] <http://www.kltv.com/Global/story.asp?S=13494782>
- [2] <http://slatest.slate.com/id/2274821/>

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Rita says:

1. [November 13, 2010 at 1:30 pm](#)

The negative image of the BBB is simply a result of a bad economy. The BBB is hiring individuals that lack respect and integrity for both the BBB and business owners.

If you put an unqualified sales person behind a desk and offer the employee commission to sale your product, then you will get positive sales and negative results.

BBB, hire qualified individuals and pay your consultants a reasonable base salary.



2. [ron brown](#) says:

[November 13, 2010 at 1:42 pm](#)

i wish i had known that a long time ago now i know why companies i ve complained about didnt bother to respond . the bbb.has done a great injustice to the consumer who relied on them to be our watch dog



3. [Bryan Ellis](#) says:

[November 13, 2010 at 2:20 pm](#)

I disagree with Rita. There's been a long history of the BBB disregarding the rights of small business and using their contrived role as a "watchdog" to essentially extort small business people into behaving as the BBB wants. I'm glad that more people know how thoroughly illegitimate they are.

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## The Politics of Real Estate

Few industries are as profoundly impacted by the political machinations in Washington as the real estate industry. Whether it's old legislation like Jimmy Carter's Community Reinvestment Act or Barack Obama's massive mortgage bailouts, the U.S. political machine has a huge impact (usually bad) on the business of real estate.

Ideally, we could ignore politics. But here at the Bryan Ellis Real Estate Letter, we insist on seeing the world with clarity - including the reality of Washington's aggressive involvement in every facet of our business, from mortgage lending to real estate sales license; from loan modification regulations to appraisal requirements... every piece of our business is profoundly impacted by politics. So rather than stick our heads in the sand and ignore reality, readers of the Bryan Ellis Real Estate Letter choose to be informed and prepared.



## Mortgage Industry News

Few things change more rapidly than the mortgage market, and with the increasing dominance of GSE's Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac over the mortgage business, it's more important than ever to keep up. Here are a few recent mortgage news updates:

### • Mortgage News

- [Bank of America Takes on the Title Companies](#)
- ["Creepy, Crass" Way to Escape Foreclosures Could Break the Bank](#)
- [Mortgage Interest Tax Deduction Headed For The Chopping Block?](#)
- ["Extreme" Mortgage Delinquencies on the Rise](#)
- [Foreclosure-Gate Delays will Prolong Housing Pain](#)
- [Wells Fargo Identifies Foreclosure Problems Only Out of an "Abundance of Caution"](#)
- [Fidelity National Financial Drops Foreclosure Guarantee Requirement](#)
- [Mortgage Bankers Association Predicts Slow-Down in Refinancing](#)
- [Fannie Mae Offers Forbearance for Veterans](#)
- [Bank of America Will Resume Foreclosures before Halloween](#)



## About Bryan Ellis

[Bryan Ellis](#) is an Atlanta-based real estate analyst and publisher of the widely read newsletter "The Bryan Ellis Real Estate Letter". With over 125,000 subscribers - including real estate investors, agents, brokers, appraisers and other real estate professionals - the Bryan Ellis Real Estate Letter is among America's largest sources of unbiased coverage of politics and public policy for the real estate industry.

Bryan Ellis serves as editor in chief for the Bryan Ellis Real Estate Letter and is assisted by an extraordinary staff of [writers, researchers and editors](#) who are each real estate experts in their own rite and who assure that the news we report is well researched, factual, and highly relevant to today's real estate industry.

Bryan is very happily married and has two wonderful daughters. He makes his home in the suburbs of Atlanta, Georgia. You can contact the team at the Bryan Ellis Real Estate Letter [here](#).

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