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Better Business Bureau revises rating system

Denies 'pay-to-play' but acknowledges stigma of criticism

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November 21, 2010

BY **KARA SPAK** Staff Reporter/kspak@suntimes.com

The Better Business Bureau is revising its grading system amid criticism that preferential ratings were being given to businesses that paid for its accreditation.

Gone will be the additional points businesses received for accreditation, which the BBB charges fees for.

"Everyone is on the same level playing field" whether or not the business is accredited, said Steve Bernas, president and CEO of the Chicago and Northern Illinois Better Business Bureau. "I categorically deny it was a pay-to-play, but the stigma was there."

The veteran consumer protection organization announced the change this week following criticism by Connecticut's attorney general that a pay-to-play system gave members a ratings boost over non-members.

Bernas said businesses pay and go through a thorough review process for accreditation, which allows them to use the BBB symbol. Accreditation also obligates businesses to resolve complaints.

In the last two years, the BBB revoked the accreditation of 158 organizations, and in the past year, 40 local businesses were denied accreditation, Bernas said.

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luciusverenus wrote:

Hi voxpop, As always, nice to hear from you again. My concern is with the abridging of the law on the 18th floor of the Daley Center. I have yet to find one judge in the Probate Court of Cook County who has not taken advantage of a ward, ward's family or ward's estate. If one exists please contact me and I will publicize it on my blog. The usual ploy used by the judges and lawyers is the "pool trust" where by the estate is cleaned out and yet allows the ward to be maintained by Medicaid. The ward's annuities, pensions, vets benefits and Social Security payments are siphoned into the "pool trust" to pay the various bloodsucking whores of the court. These misdeeds are not deemed enforceable by the ARDC and Judicial Review and this is shameful. Again as always, Your ProbateShark, Lucius Verenus, Schoolmaster, ProbateSharks.com

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billy buoy wrote:

BBB is bad but as bad bad as Moodys---who helped lead the entire Country into near depression with their pay to play and phony AAA junk

bond ratings. When it comes to companies---just to to ripoffreport.com...its free, the complaints remain there, no time limit, and the owners cant buy their way off the list. At least you can decide after reading complaints that arent tainted or bought off, if you want to do business with an outfit or not. Nearly all these "rating" outfits are shells for pay to play....BBB gave Wolfgang Pucks an F cuz he wouldnt pay. And a dude sent in a phony white supremacist site that the BBB gave an A to after the phony group paid the fee. Bernas, you got to do better than this...just cuz you say "its all better now" dont make it so...how they gonna pay the likes of you and yours if companies no longer pay? You're not doing a public service here or not for profit. About as good as Chamber of Commerce---like Moody's they'll stamp an approval on any dump that pays their fees.

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