

Tallahassee Democrat

Posted on Tuesday, May 10, 2005

Online dating bill was about safety

Re: "Online dating bill serves special interest" (letters, May 6).

A letter to the editor completely misrepresented the safer online dating bills we proudly sponsored this session. The bills that were filed never required that an online dating company must conduct a criminal background check. The writer overlooks the most important fact: This is about protecting the safety of Florida's citizens who deserve to know whether the online dating service they are using does or does not conduct criminal background checks.

A staggering number of online dating site users wrongly assume that background checks are conducted, when, in reality few online dating services choose to do so. This legislation attempts to protect Floridians from a false sense of security in thinking that most online dating firms take reasonable steps to ensure that convicted felons and sex offenders are not able to communicate with them.

All background checks are foolproof, but they certainly add a layer of protection. That is why businesses and government agencies across our state conduct such checks on potential employees. Our bills encourage consumers not to be overly reliant on the checks, but to use them as just one measure in practicing safe dating.

REP. KEVIN AMBLER, R-LUTZ

SEN. VICTOR CRIST, R-TAMPA

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