oxygen

May 15, 2017

Report: Children Are Killed For Insurance Money In Alarming Numbers

By: Gina Tron

A commonality among many child murders is that the killer had insured the victims' lives and made themselves sole beneficiaries.

According to a report by the Washington Post, this situation is all too common. One such example is the 2001 murder of 3-month-old Shane Paris Sissoko, who died from head trauma. Her father had been working to become the sole beneficiary of a $750,000 life insurance policy on the baby and was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison. Same with 15-month-old Prince McLeod Rams, who was either drowned or suffocated in 2012.

The Washington Post editorial stated: "The apparent ease with which the killers were able to obtain policies shows that sufficient safeguards are not in place. Particularly worrisome — actually, horrifying — are the instances in which, with little or no scrutiny, hundreds of thousands of dollars of insurance is obtained on the lives of young and very vulnerable children."

As of now, each state establishes regulations for the insurance industry. According to the report, compliance can often be spotty. That, in addition to some insurance business being conducted online makes an opportunity much easier for someone with bad intent.

Dennis Jay of the Coalition Against Insurance Fraud stated that there are ways that industry could tighten these procedures.

Dennis Jay of the Coalition Against Insurance Fraud stated that there are ways that industry could tighten these procedures.

One state did just that, after two horrific murder cases involving children. In 1999, a 10-year-old boy was drowned after he was adopted by a couple who purchased a $650,000 policy on his life. In 2003, a 3-year-old was drowned by her stepfather, who had a $200,000 policy on her. Both cases took place in Washington. Lawmakers in the state imposed new procedures and standards for the sale of juvenile life insurance policies as a result. The state of New York also set a maximum life insurance limits for juveniles. Other states, the Washington Post article argues, including Maryland and Virginia need to follow their lead.