Home caregiver abuse involving the elderly increasing.

On the front of its Personal Journal section, the Wall Street Journal (7/15, D1, Shishkin) reports that abuse, neglect, fraud, and even killings by home caregivers are growing "as more Americans age, and try to avoid nursing homes," according to law enforcement officials and "advocates for the elderly." Both groups are calling "for better oversight of an industry" that provides the "two kinds of jobs [that] are the second- and third-fastest growing occupations in America," those of caregivers who provide "basic health services, and those who provide housekeeping, cooking, and non-medical help." The Journal adds, "Health aides are often certified nursing assistants, who are generally licensed and regulated." Yet, "the bulk of the abuse cases involves caregivers hired to provide non-medical assistance," and those caregivers, "who aren't required to receive special training, are only loosely overseen." One problem is that there is no central registry of caregivers. In addition, "most employers" of these caregivers "don't always have, or seek access, to police, federal, or each others' records," Therefore, "at a minimum," caregivers should go through "a state police criminal-background check."