



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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Sen. Stouffer Appointed to Joint Committee Addressing Violation of Consumers' Rights

JEFFERSON CITY – Sen. Bill Stouffer, R-Napton, has earned an appointment to serve on the Senate Joint Committee on Preneed Funeral Contracts. The joint committee was created as a provision of [Senate Bill 788](#), which was signed by the governor in July and became effective August 28.

The [Senate Joint Committee on Preneed Funeral Contracts](#) was established to make a comprehensive study and analysis of the consumer and economic impact on the preneed funeral contract industry in Missouri. The committee is also charged with determining the need for changes in statutory law regarding preneed funeral contracts, as well as making any other recommendations to the General Assembly relating to its findings.

“More and more Missourians are making advanced funeral plans for themselves or for their loved ones,” said Sen. Stouffer. “Many choose this option to plan a funeral ahead of time to relieve unwanted stress at a time of grief for family and friends.”

Many states regulate preneed funeral contracts and these regulations grant citizens certain rights as consumers. Prepaying for funerals in advance, often called pre-need, is what sparks many of these state regulations.

The joint committee’s formation also occurred shortly after Missouri’s Attorney General filed a lawsuit accusing Mason Securities Association, based in Creve Coeur, Mo., of violating the state’s laws regarding preneed plans. The violations include keeping too large of a portion of the money from preneed contracts, failing to sign the contracts, and mixing its assets from preneed contracts with those from another service, National Prearranged Services.

“During an emotional and vulnerable time for people who recently lost a loved one, they need to be protected by the state regarding these preneed funeral arrangements,” said Sen. Stouffer. “As a member of this newly-formed committee, I will continue to look out for consumers’ rights in our state.”

The joint committee is made up of seven members of the Senate and seven members of the House of Representatives. A full report of the committee’s recommendations will be submitted to the General Assembly by January 21, 2009.

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