

## Pre-need funeral contract investigation coming

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By [Bob Priddy](#)

A possible crisis in the pre-need funeral insurance industry will come under special investigation this summer by people who write the laws for the funeral industry.

The state has gotten an agreement with National Prearranged Services to suspend all sales of pre-need contracts in Missouri....and has gotten a consent order with the parent company, Lincoln Memorial Life, to stop manipulating the trust funds without telling those buying the plans.

Senator Delbert Scott of Lowry City, who says the situation is "a crisis that we have to address, and the sooner the better," expects to chair or co-chair a legislative investigative committee meeting as early as this summer to look at what's been going on...who's been hurt...and what the state can do about it.

He says one-half of Missouri's funeral homes have sold plans through National Prearranged Services. And Scott says some people might be out of luck.

He says the present laws are written to the benefit of the pre-need companies. The state Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors says the law is so lax that the board has no way of knowing who is selling these plans or how much money is in trust funds. The board also says it cannot refuse to allow someone who might have stolen millions from a trust fund to sell again.

The insurance department has established a hotline for people with questions about this issue. The number is 866-296-8801. For more information about NPS, the department recommends this website:

[www.pr.mo.gov/embalmers.asp](http://www.pr.mo.gov/embalmers.asp)

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