



Missouri Attorney General

Attorney General's News Release

November 15, 2010

Brandtonies pleads guilty in pre-need funeral fraud case

Columbia, Mo. – Attorney General Chris Koster said today that Thomas Brandtonies, Jr., has pled guilty in a Bates County court to six counts of stealing pre-need funeral funds.

Koster said Brandtonies formerly operated Underwood-Brandtonies Funeral Home in Butler, which closed in February 2009. He said Brandtonies assured consumers who bought pre-need funeral plans that their money would be used to pay for their funeral services at their time of death. Missouri law requires that pre-need funeral funds be placed in trust, but instead, Brandtonies used the money for his own purposes.

“Thomas Brandtonies, Jr., has admitted defrauding consumers who were trying to make sure their funeral costs would be paid at the time of their death,” Koster said. “The Attorney General’s Office is committed to seeking justice for vulnerable consumers who have suffered at the hands of those who take advantage of them.”

Koster said Brandtonies will be sentenced in 90 days. Under the terms of a plea agreement reached with his office, the state’s sentencing recommendation is contingent on the amount of restitution, if any, that Brandtonies pays prior to sentencing. Full restitution for all pre-need purchasers totals \$123,273. If no restitution is forthcoming prior to sentencing, the state may recommend that Brandtonies be sentenced to a maximum of seven years in prison.