

#2627

**From:** Rob Reid [RReid@accessservices.org]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 08, 2009 4:33 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Preneed Funeral Arrangements

RECEIVED  
OCT 9 AM 7:20  
LEGISLATIVE SERVICES DIVISION  
HARRISBURG, PA

The Honorable Michael P. McGeehan, Chairman  
House Professional Licensure Committee  
333 E. Main Capitol Building  
P.O. Box 202096  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

**Re: Final-Form Regulations - Preneed Funeral Arrangements**

Dear Representative McGeehan,

I am writing this note to strongly encourage you to disapprove the final form preneed funeral arrangements regulations. Access Services serves two thousand of Pennsylvania's most vulnerable citizens. The majority of the individuals we serve are low income and have limited resources. Planning must be done prudently in order for these individuals to have an opportunity to respond to future funeral expenses. Vehicles such as Preneed Funeral Arrangements make this possible. SSI and Medical Assistance (MA) eligibility can be lost if an individual has higher income or greater resources than permitted by federal law. To remain eligible for SSI and MA an individual can have no more than \$2,000 in assets. Federal law excludes an irrevocable burial fund as long as the amount does not exceed \$1,500.

Our community system is always looking for ways to maximize resources and identify and implement efficiencies. One of these proven efficiencies is the ability for individuals and their families to prearrange their funeral arrangements without these funds being counted as an asset. The current ability for individuals to prearrange their funerals has worked well for our system and has provided a cost-effective means of honoring the desires of individuals and their families consistent with their choice and available funds. PAR is committed to both preserving choice for individuals with mental retardation and their families, and ensuring that these services are not unnecessarily restricted.

The overwhelming majority of the individuals our members serve are supported through Medicaid and Social Security, and it is imperative that funds set aside for funeral arrangements are not counted against the individual as an asset. Otherwise, their eligibility to receive funding for critical services is jeopardized.

The proposed regulations appear to have a potentially negative impact on individuals receiving services in the community disabilities system.

I urge the Committee not to support the final-form preneed funeral arrangements regulations and to urge the IRRC to disapprove the regulations.

**Rob Reid**  
**President & CEO**  
**500 Office Center Drive, Suite 100**  
**Fort Washington, PA 19034**  
**P: 215-540-2150**  
**F: 215-540-2165**



**Confidentiality Notice:** This e-mail message, together with any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and/or privileged information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure, forwarding, or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient and have received this message in error, please contact the sender by reply e-mail immediately and destroy all copies of the original message.