



The Chamber is urging all businesses who are required to carry Workers' Compensation Benefits to review the following News Alert from the Illinois Chamber of Commerce



Urgent Alert from the Illinois Chamber of Commerce on

Workers' Compensation Legislation - This issue is the most critical pro-business matter currently pending before the General Assembly. This is a matter that requires thousands of business owners, managers and employers to make their voices heard by the legislators.

May is the most important month in the legislative calendar. The opportunity for significant change in Illinois' workers' compensation laws is before the General Assembly this month. NOW is the time to take positive, proactive steps to communicate with your legislators about the need for change and how important this matter is to employers. If we are going to be successful with this endeavor it is important that you, the constituent, take the initiative to let your legislators know about your experiences, your costs, your concerns, and your frustrations with our broken system.

A strong workers' comp reform bill must:

- Tighten the definition of workplace injury (causation). Workplace injuries should occur at the workplace! Employers will never get a fair shake in the system as long as a 1% threshold allows workers to qualify for comp.
- Use objective measures to determine the extent of injury. Use of AMA Guidelines to will help make sure that compensation better matches the extent of the injury.
- Allow employers to direct care within a network of providers. Employers are required to pay for medical care under comp, but doctor shopping is a serious problem under the current system. Employers should be allowed to make sure they are paying for reasonable, quality care.
- Enact strong utilization review to a reduced fee schedule. Illinois' fee schedule is outrageously high and needs to be reduced. However, the reduction must be accompanied by strong utilization review or else savings will dissipate with over-utilization.

Legislators must understand that the actions they take this year will be measurable. Consequently, the task at hand is to make sure that when we look back upon the consequences of their decisions four years from now, we'll see that Illinois' status has improved. We need to be clearly competitive, and reflect a system that is closer to the mainstream of the nation's laws.

Make sure the legislators with whom you communicate understand that this is an issue where failure is not an option, nor is tokenism. Specifically, we do not want a repeat of the 2005 "fix" that resulted in Illinois' workers' compensation rates increasing by nearly 17 percent while at the same time average rates across the country declined by 19 percent.

Proclaiming the need for reform is the easy part. Now the General Assembly must produce legislation that represents meaningful reform and not the window dressing bills we've seen thus far.

This is where the employers of Illinois must make a stand! More specifically, employers must communicate a loud and clear need for true reform and not the reshuffling of deck chairs. Tell your legislator today they must support a strong workers' compensation reform bill. The Illinois Chamber of Commerce encourages you to share your experiences with your legislators with regards to the current workers' compensation system.

An Invitation From The Chamber . . .

To learn more about what has been going on in Springfield, the Chamber will be hosting a Biz Over Breakfast on June 15th at Boulder Ridge Country Club. Senator Althoff and Rep. Mike Tryon will be our guest speakers. Cost: \$15/members, \$20/non-members.

For more information and to RSVP, please call 847-658-5300.

State Governor Pat Quinn Springfield: 217 782-0244
State Senator Pamela J. Althoff (R) 32 nd Springfield: 217 782-8000 Crystal Lake: 815 455-6330
State Senator Chris Lauzen (R) 25 th Springfield: 217 782-0052 Aurora: 630 264-2334 www.ilga.gov/senate/
State Representative Jack D. Franks (D) 63 rd Springfield: 217 782-1717 Woodstock: 815 334-0063
State Representative Timothy L. Schmitz (R) 49 th Springfield: 217 782-5457 Geneva: 630 845-9590
State Representative Michael W. Tryon (R) 64 th Springfield: 217 782-0432 Crystal Lake: 815 459-6453 www.ilga.gov/house/