
SENATE BILL 6775

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2010 Regular Session

By Senators Kohl-Welles and Keiser

Read first time 01/26/10. Referred to Committee on Labor, Commerce & Consumer Protection.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a task force to study and report on the
2 state's workers' compensation system; adding a new section to chapter
3 51.04 RCW; and providing an expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 51.04 RCW
6 to read as follows:

7 The legislature finds that Washington's workers' compensation
8 system is a complex system that has several unique features not
9 commonly found in the workers' compensation systems of other
10 governments. The legislature acknowledges that there have been calls
11 for systematic reform of Washington's workers' compensation system in
12 order to bring the system more in line with the systems of other
13 states. However, the legislature recognizes that the fundamental
14 purpose of the workers' compensation system is to provide sure and
15 certain relief for workers injured in their work and that proposals for
16 systematic reform need deliberate, collaborative, and thoughtful
17 evaluation in order to ensure changes have no adverse impact on worker
18 outcomes, accountability, system efficiency, or cost predictability.
19 The legislature therefore directs the department of labor and

1 industries to convene a task force to evaluate and recommend methods to
2 improve the coordination and provision of quality, timely medical
3 treatment; methods to improve outcomes for, and shorten the duration
4 of, long-term disability claims; and methods to refine and resolve
5 systemic liabilities and long-term pension trends.

6 The task force consists of seven members appointed by the director
7 upon consultation with the workers' compensation advisory committee and
8 the governor. Three of the members must be labor representatives, one
9 of which is a member of the workers' compensation advisory committee;
10 and three of the members must be business representatives, one of which
11 is a member of the workers' compensation advisory committee. The
12 seventh member is a representative of the department, who acts as the
13 task force chair. The legislature encourages the director to appoint
14 individuals with practical experience or expertise in workers
15 compensation who are willing to maintain focus on the goals of the task
16 force, as described in this section, and provide consistency and
17 transparency to the development of recommendations.

18 The task force must periodically report to the director, the
19 workers' compensation advisory committee, and the appropriate standing
20 committees of the legislature. The task force must prepare a final
21 report to submit to the legislature in December 2010. The final report
22 must include task force recommendations for changes to the workers'
23 compensation system that will improve positive outcomes for workers,
24 increase accountability and system efficiency, and improve cost
25 predictability.

26 Nonlegislative members, except those representing an employer or
27 organization, are entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses in
28 accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

29 This section expires January 1, 2011.

--- END ---