

Michigan Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors Supports Workers' Compensation Reform Legislation

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has unanimously voted to support legislation to amend Michigan's Workers' Disability Compensation Act.

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"Recent court decisions have created unworkable standards for favored work positions, and the lack of a clear standard for mental disability, or stress, claims make it difficult for employers, employees, and the judicial system to make consistent and fair benefit determinations," said Rex E. Schlaybaugh, Jr., Chairman of the Michigan Chamber Board and Vice Chairman of Oxford Automotive, Inc., in Bloomfield Hills.

The Michigan Chamber Board unanimously voted April 24 to support legislation to amend the Workers' Disability Compensation Act in the following ways:

- * State that mental disability claims arising from lawful, nondiscriminatory, good faith personnel actions shall not be compensable;
- * Establish a specific period of time during which an offer of favored work must remain available when the employee has unreasonably refused the offer; and
- * Specify that an employee may be terminated for non-compliance with the employer's rules, regulations and procedures during the first 100 weeks of reasonable employment, without triggering a presumption that workers' compensation benefits should resume.

State Representative Wayne Kuipers (R-Holland) recently introduced House Bill 4512 to amend the Workers' Disability Compensation Act. The bill has been referred to the House Committee on Employment Relations, Training & Safety. Michigan Chamber President & CEO Jim Barrett said the Chamber will work with Rep. Kuipers to incorporate the Board's recommendations and pass the legislation.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is a statewide business organization representing approximately 7,000 employers, trade associations and local chambers of commerce. The Michigan Chamber of Commerce was established in 1959 to be an advocate for Michigan's job providers in the legislative, political and legal process.

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