

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2011 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 40
Economic Matters

(Delegate Feldman)

Finance

**Joint Committee on Workers' Compensation Benefit and Insurance Oversight -
Membership**

This bill increases the membership of the Joint Committee on Workers' Compensation Benefit and Insurance Oversight from 15 to 16. The additional member is appointed jointly by the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Delegates and must be a representative of a self-insured local government entity. The bill also deletes obsolete committee responsibilities.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill does not substantively change State activities or operations.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The Joint Committee on Workers' Compensation Benefit and Insurance Oversight is charged with examining and evaluating the condition of the workers' compensation benefit and insurance structure in the State. The committee is required to review the adequacy and appropriateness of all workers' compensation benefits and make recommendations for necessary changes. The current committee includes representatives from various industries and professions including the insurance industry, the business community, and the medical profession.

Background: Many local governments in the State are self-insured for the purposes of workers' compensation. Self-insured local governments can be disproportionately affected by changes in workers' compensation laws because local governments employ many high-risk employees – such as law enforcement or emergency personnel – and local government personnel are more likely to receive benefits for diseases that are presumed to be related to their dangerous or stressful occupations.

Chapter 225 of 2007 expanded the committee to include a member who is certified by the Workers' Compensation Commission as a rehabilitation service provider.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 670 of 2010, a similar bill, passed in the House but received no further action after a hearing in the Senate Finance Committee.

Cross File: SB 1 (Senator Middleton) - Finance.

Information Source(s): Maryland Insurance Administration, Workers' Compensation Commission, Department of Legislative Services

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