



Ankin Law Office LLC

Protecting the Rights of Injured Workers

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Proposed Illinois Legislation Would Decimate Workers' Compensation



Last week, Illinois Representative John Bradley introduced House Bill 1032. This proposed legislation would effectively repeal the Workers' Compensation Act, leaving injured workers to fend for themselves in Illinois circuit courts. The legislation was spurred, in part, by the threat of Caterpillar, Inc., a company that is one of the largest manufacturers in the state.

As explained in this Chicago Breaking Business blog [post](#), Caterpillar's CEO recently sent a letter to Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn, in which he suggested that it cost his company too much money to do business in Illinois. He indicated that other states were courting the company to move its operations from Illinois and that it would do so unless Illinois cut back drastically on government spending and rolled back tax increases.

Representative Bradley's legislation is intended to address this perceived problem of the high cost of business in Illinois, by significantly reducing the ability of injured workers to collect benefits for their injuries, as explained in this Pantagraph.com blog [post](#):

The legislation, sponsored by state Rep. John Bradley and pending in the House, would repeal the Workers' Compensation Act and put workers' compensation cases into the state's circuit courts.

Business groups and Republicans who wish to see reform in the system want to see employees who are injured at work prove that their injury is primarily a result of work. If the injury was not related to work, then the employee should get no remedy. This concept is called "causation."

Under current law, Bradley said, if an employee is injured at work, he or she is compensated. The Marion Democrat said eliminating the system is the only way to bring causation in.

However, as explained in the Pantagraph post, many oppose this bill, including the Illinois Chamber of Congress. Also opposing the legislation is the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Council 31, for the reasons explained by its spokesman:

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“The workers’ compensation system is a bedrock of fairness for workers who are injured on the job,” said spokesman Anders Lindall. “The system ensures that a family isn’t bankrupted by medical bills or lost wages because of an injury suffered at work.”

At the end of the day, workers’ compensation reform is inevitable and benefits will likely be reduced. However, hopefully, for the sake of Illinois workers, there will be a fair compromise reached that balances the perceived savings resulting from the change with the need to provide adequate coverage for [injured Illinois workers](#).

Howard Ankin of Ankin Law Office LLC (www.ankinlaw.com) handles [workers’ compensation](#) and [personal injury cases](#). Mr. Ankin can be reached at (312) 346-8780 and howard@ankinlaw.com.

By [Admin - BN](#)
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