



NEWS

New York State
Public Employees Federation
AFL-CIO

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PEF's Workers' Compensation reporting bill signed into law

Albany - New York State Public Employees Federation (PEF) President Kenneth Brynien hailed the signing of PEF's **Workplace Injury Disclosure and Accountability** bill (S1710/A6642) by Gov. Eliot Spitzer.

"The governor recognizes with the signing of this bill, the importance of reducing work-related injury in state agencies and improving safety programs," Brynien said. "This law is long overdue and will go a long way in helping state agency managers and union leaders to identify trends and reduce workers' compensation costs by preventing injury and illness on the job."

In the 2007-2008 state budget, the state estimates its annual cost for direct workers compensation claims by injured state workers to be \$220 million.

The **Workplace Injury Disclosure and Accountability** bill, sponsored by Senator Joseph Robach and Assembly Member Susan John requires that the Department of Civil Service produce an annual report on state employees' workers' compensation injuries and related costs to help agencies identify prevention strategies. The Civil Service Department has not produced such a report for 15 years. The legislation requires reporting workers' compensation cases by agency as well as the amount of lost work time and cost-of-wage replacement and medical expenses. It also calls for a list of the job titles with work-related injury and illness rates that are more than 25 percent above the average for all state agencies. According to the legislation, the report must be published no later than September 13 of each year, beginning in 2008.

"This law is comprehensive, in that it requires a report on **all** work-related injuries and illnesses that generate a workers' compensation claim for state employees," Brynien said. "This valuable information can be used to reduce injuries in the workplace which has been a key component of PEF's **Stop Workplace Violence Campaign**."

PEF mounted an aggressive **Stop Workplace Violence Campaign** in 2005 urging passage of three bills including the **Workplace Injury Disclosure and Accountability** bill. The **Workplace Violence Prevention** bill was signed into law in June, 2006. That law requires public employers with more than 20 employees to assess risk and develop and implement a written plan of action to prevent potential workplace violence. PEF is continuing to push the third and final bill, The **Judi Scanlon** bill (S3101/A2316) which directs that an Office of Mental Health employee who is required to enter the residence of a person with serious mental illness can request to be accompanied by another employee for safety reasons.

The New York State Public Employees Federation is the second-largest state-employee union representing 57,000 professional, scientific and technical employees. For more information please call PEF Director of Public Relations, Darcy Wells at (518) 785-1900 ext. 277 or (518) 859-1274.

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