

SB 5566 - S AMD TO S-1949.5 **181**

By Senators Nelson, Keiser, Chase, Prentice

NOT ADOPTED 03/05/2011

1 On page 1, line 3, strike all of section 1 and insert the
2 following:

3
4 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 51.04
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 The legislature finds that Washington's workers' compensation
7 system is a complex system that has several unique features not
8 commonly found in the workers' compensation systems of other
9 governments. The legislature acknowledges that there have been calls
10 for systematic reform of Washington's workers' compensation system in
11 order to reduce short term and long term pension costs, and bring the
12 system more in line with the systems of other states. However, the
13 legislature finds it is critical that proposals to reduce costs be
14 balanced against the fundamental purpose of the workers' compensation
15 system, which is to provide sure and certain relief for workers
16 injured in the course of their employment. The legislature finds that
17 proposals for significant systematic workers compensation reform need
18 deliberate, collaborative, and thoughtful evaluation in order to
19 ensure changes have no adverse impact on worker outcomes,
20 accountability, system efficiency, or cost predictability. The
21 legislature therefore establishes a joint select committee on workers
22 compensation to review and recommend proposals to reduce short term
23 and long term pension costs while protecting the rights and outcomes
24 of injured workers, including an examination of voluntary settlement
25 agreements, programs to encourage and facilitate light duty and
26 transitional work, and an evaluation of occupational diseases.

27

1 The joint select committee shall consist of eight members,
2 including the chair and ranking minority member of the Senate labor,
3 commerce, and consumer protection committee and the chair and ranking
4 minority member of the House labor and workforce development
5 committee. Two of the remaining members shall be appointed by the
6 leaders of the two largest caucuses in the Senate; and two shall be
7 appointed by the leaders of the two largest caucuses in the House of
8 Representatives. Members of the committee must be reimbursed for
9 travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120; expenses of the
10 committee must be paid jointly by the Senate and the House of
11 Representatives; and committee expenditures are subject to approval by
12 the Senate facilities and operations committee and the House of
13 Representatives executive rules committee, or their successor
14 committees. The committee shall choose its co-chairs from among its
15 membership, with the chair of the Senate labor, commerce, and consumer
16 protection committee and the chair of the House labor and workforce
17 development committee convening the initial meeting of the committee.

18 The committee must report its findings and recommendations to the
19 appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2011.

20 This section expires January 1, 2012."
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22 On page 4, line 4, strike all of section 2.
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24 On page 5, line 14, strike all of section 3.
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26 On page 5, line 28, strike all of section 4.
27

28 Renumber the remaining sections.
29

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31 By Senators Nelson, Keiser, Chase, Prentice

32 NOT ADOPTED 03/05/2011

33 On page 12, line 7 of the title amendment, strike everything after
34 "authorization" and insert "creation of a joint select committee to

1 review and evaluate proposals to reduce short term and long term costs
2 while protecting the rights and outcomes of injured workers and
3 creation of a return to work subsidy program; reenacting and amending
4 RCW 51.32.090; adding a new section to chapter 51.04 RCW; and creating
5 a new section."

EFFECT: Removes the sections authorizing voluntary settlements
and creates a joint select committee.

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