

HB 1792-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST OF PROPOSED 1ST SUBSTITUTE)

Requires the department of labor and industries to conduct a study of the incidence of total permanent disability pensions in the state's workers' compensation system. The department shall contract with an independent researcher with demonstrated expertise in workers' compensation systems. The department shall consult with the workers' compensation advisory committee in determining the criteria to use in selecting a researcher and in selecting the researcher with which to contract.

Requires that, in conducting the study, the researcher selected shall consider the following: (1) Causes of the recent increase in total permanent disability cases, including changes in injured worker demographics, policy, and other areas that may be identified;

(2) Future anticipated total permanent disability trends; and

(3) A comparison of Washington's permanent disability claims experience and injured workers with other states and jurisdictions ;

(4) The impact of the standard for finding workers employable on the incidence of permanent total disability pensions; and

(5) The impact of vocational rehabilitation under RCW 51.32.095, and any improvements to vocational rehabilitation, on the incidence of permanent total disability pensions.

Requires the department to report to the workers' compensation advisory committee on the results of the study on or before July 1, 2008.

Provides that the act shall be null and void if appropriations are not approved.