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Sponsor Testimony for HB 27

Good morning Chairman Smith, Vice-Chair Ryan, Ranking Member Cera, and members of the Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 27, the Bureau of Worker's Compensation Budget, as it has been re-referred from Insurance Committee.

The last time I stood before you, for the IC budget, I had the simple job of presenting a clean bill. Today, HB 27 may need a little more explaining. We have worked hard with various interested parties and legislators since this bill was first heard in my committee on February 22nd. Now, seven hearings later, we finally have a workable sub bill to present.

I will let the BWC themselves speak to the original bill and its contents. I just want to speak to the improvements made by the Insurance Committee. While some a number of our amendments were either of small effect or a technical nature, there are ten substantive changes which I would like to highlight.

Sub HB 27 will do the following:

- Change the statute of limitations for Workers Comp claims from 2 years to 1
- Make several process changes to encourage settlements in order to reduce court costs
- Place a 12-week cap on payments for Temporary Total Disability claims until the employer is provided with the expected paperwork
- Prohibit a state agency from adopting a rule or taking any other quasi-legislative or quasi-judicial action that has a substantive or procedural retrospective effect unless given express authorization by the General Assembly
- Require BWC to develop standards for maintaining an adequate number of certified healthcare providers
- For employees who apply for permanent partial disability and miss their scheduled medical appointment, the sub bill will require the BWC to adopt rules addressing the manner in which an employee will be notified of a possible C-92 application dismissal as well as how the employee may refile their application
- Change the statute of repose for the firefighter cancer presumption from 20 to 15 years
- Allows municipalities to argue causation, in the case of the firefighter cancer presumption, using competent scientific evidence

- State that public employers shall not require a current employee to pay the cost of a medical examination required by the employer as a condition of continued employment.
- And finally, make illegal aliens or unauthorized aliens not eligible for workers' compensation benefits

I believe that these changes will improve our worker's compensation system here in Ohio. All of this being said, I am happy to recommend the passage of the BWC budget, HB 27. Thank you for your time today. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.