

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed
Vote:	6 - 0 - 1
Yeas:	Berger, Esquivel, Holvey, Rosenbaum, Smith P., Schaufler
Nays:	0
Exc.:	Edwards C.
Prepared By:	Theresa Van Winkle, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	5/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Requires a physician serving as an attending physician for a workers' compensation claim to be responsible for treatment of the worker's compensable injury. Allows an emergency room physician who is not authorized to serve as an attending physician to authorize temporary disability benefits for a maximum of 14 days.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Provisions of the measure
- Support of the Workers' Compensation Management-Labor Advisory Committee

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Clarifies the intent of the measure by removing the phrase "on an ongoing basis" from the measure.

BACKGROUND: Currently, the attending physician (medical doctor, osteopath, or an oral and maxillofacial surgeon) has responsibility for the treatment of the workers' compensation claim. When workers seek treatment through an emergency room, the worker typically sees the physician for just that visit. This can sometimes cause difficulty for claims adjusters who have to contact the emergency room doctor to clarify return-to-work options, temporary disability authorization, treatment issues, and obtaining closing examinations.

SB 504 B excludes an emergency room physician from the definition of an attending physician when they refer the worker to a primary care physician for follow-up treatment. The emergency room physician is allowed to authorize time loss benefits for a maximum of 14 days, providing time for the injured worker to find a qualified attending physician to manage their care and authorize time loss benefits as needed. Emergency room physicians who maintain an independent practice can act as the workers' attending physician if they qualify to be an attending physician and provide the injured workers' follow-up care.