



To: Chair Barker, members of the House Business and Labor committee
Re: SEIU's support of HB 3022

SEIU represents over 80,000 workers from all parts of Oregon, who provide critical services in health care, property services, long term care and public services. Our members care deeply about quality, just care for injured workers. That is why we support HB 3022.

An injury at work can devastate a family. SEIU members who do back-breaking work cleaning our public spaces, and taking care of our elderly, developmentally disabled or hospitalized community members are often expected to do physically extraneous work. When an injury occurs, without a reliable and just safety net to catch them they face losing their income, savings, even their homes as they go into debt to pay for care and basic services.

Our public sector and health care members see the results of a broken workers compensation system every day. They see people pushed to public services as a long-term injury and inadequate support keeps them from reentering the job market. They see people making critical choices about basic necessities as they try and pay for out-of-pocket health-care expenses.

HB 3022 would improve the workers compensation system in several ways to better ensure that it is doing what it is meant to do: fairly compensate injured workers for the lost work and increased health care costs an on the job injury causes. These improvements include:

- Allowing injuries to be reevaluated as more information about its diagnosis or prognosis come to light;
- Deadlines for insurance companies to reply to authorization of treatment so that people are not kept waiting for critical treatment;
- Fixing an unfair timeline of fixing over- or under-payments that does not favor the worker.

These fixes are straightforward, and incredibly fair. The current insurance system incentivizes denying claims in order to build reserves and increase savings; but this is not what insurance and workers comp should operate. SAIF and for-profit private insurers should be in the business of fairly compensating employees when it is warranted. That means if circumstances in someone's claim change, then so should the compensation. HB 3022 would be a step towards ensuring that happens.

SEIU encourages you to support HB 3022, and to move it to the floor with a "do pass" recommendation.

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