

WORKERS' COMPENSATION
MANAGEMENT-LABOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Full Committee Meeting

Mar. 27, 2025
10 a.m.–12 p.m.

Committee members present via zoom:

Scott Strickland, Sheet Metal Workers Local #16
Patrick Priest, Citycounty Insurance Services
Sara Duckwall, Duckwall Fruit (**Absent**)
Ryan Hearn, Roseburg Forest Products(**Absent**)
Stacy Lewallen, Fortis Construction, Inc.
Sarah Merrick, City of Salem Fire Department
Kim Schlessinger, Samaritan Health Services
Lorne Bulling, IronWorkers Local 29
Margaret Weddell, Labor Representative
Emily Rivas, Oregon Nurses Association
Andrew Stolfi, DCBS Director, *ex officio*

Staff:

Teri Watson, MLAC Committee Administrator
Megan Parsons, MLAC Assistant
Baaba Ampah, MLAC Assistant

Agenda Item	Discussion
Opening (00:00:00)	Affirmation and Roll Call Co-Chair Strickland called the meeting to order, and shared an affirmation. Teri Watson called the roll of members. A quorum was present.
(00:1:34)	Public Comments Dr. Verne Saboe, Oregon Chiropractic Association, provided public comment highlighting the clinical training and qualification of chiropractic physicians . He compared chiropractic training to other medical professionals, emphasizing their expertise in musculoskeletal and spine-related injury. Dr. Saboe stated chiropractors are underutilized in workers' compensation care, advocating for their inclusion to enhance patient outcomes, reduce costs, and increase patient satisfaction.
(00:06:38)	Department updates Workers' Compensation Board case law updates – Autumn Blake There were no case law updates
(00:06:53)	Workers' Compensation Division (WCD) updates – Teri Watson There were no division updates.

Unfinished Business:**HB 2800 -3**

(00:07:21) Matt West, WCD Administrator, explained that the [-3 amendment](#) of HB 2800 updates the co-employment terminology to professional employer organization (PEO). The amendment maintains the effective date of July 1, 2027, requiring termination notices provided to the director and PEO insurer, and various technical clarifications. He requested MLAC to vote on HB 2800.

(00:10:26) Jenny Dressler, National Association of Professional Employer Organizations (NAPEO), confirmed that NAPEO is in support of the bill.

(00:11:16) A brief caucus was taken.

(00:12:30) It was clarified that the bill represents current practices, that updates the worker leasing statute and streamlines existing reporting practices.

(00:13:48) A brief caucus was taken.

(00:14:34) Co-chair Strickland moved that MLAC recommend the legislature support HB 2800 with the -3 amendment with the understanding that this is a technical fix with some streamlining fixes to what is already occurring. Kim Schlessinger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

SB 991 -1

(00:16:30) Connie Whelchel, IMA Financial, explained that SB 991 would amend ORS 656.268, allowing employers to offer modified work to injured workers at off-site locations such as nonprofits. She mentioned that most other states already allow this practice and highlighted injured worker benefits such as providing meaningful modified work opportunities, quicker recoveries, improving medical and mental health outcomes. Connie also mentioned that it will benefit employers through reduced costs for employers, fairness to small businesses, and positive impacts on local communities. She noted that the [-1 amendment](#) allows modified off-site work if workers remain employers with full benefits, coverage, and subject to HR policies. She asks for MLAC's vote of approval.

(00:20:23) Co-chair Strickland asked about previously raised concerns about the sources of information in the previous presentation, and guardrails to ensure workers are not compelled to perform modified work at nonprofits that conflict with their religious, spiritual or moral beliefs. Connie responded that it hasn't typically come up as an issue elsewhere, stating many nonprofits may have religious origins but do not involve religious activities in daily operations. Regarding the sources, she mentioned that they were mostly from organizations that provide modified-duty services nationally.

(00:22:41) Margaret Weddell asked why MLAC changed statutes removing this practice and if Connie had reviewed the legislative history. Connie Welchel responded

that it was part of a wholesale change to protect injured workers' rights, and didn't find evidence of a specific reason why this particular practice was removed. Margaret Weddell expressed uncertainty, mentioning it seemed unlikely that MLAC or the legislature would change statute without specific reasoning.

(00:24:20) Sarah Merrick asked if the workers mentioned in the Sassy Onion article were injured workers. Connie Welchel clarified that they were not injured workers; instead, they were regular employees performing volunteer work after their workplace burned down. It was a positive experience for the workers.

(00:24:14) Kim Schlessinger asked if the modified work only includes non-profit organizations. Connie Welchel clarified that it applies to any business that is subject to the amendment with written agreement in those guidelines.

(00:26:39) A brief caucus was taken.

(00:27:20) Sarah Merrick moved that MLAC not support SB 991 with the -1 amendment. Co-chair Priest moved to second the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Bills waiting on amendments:

HB 3374 (SAIF)

(00:28:44) Ivo Trummer, SAIF, shared that an additional amendment is forthcoming with technical changes. SAIF is engaging with stakeholders.

HB 2799 (OTLA)

(00:29:37) Keith Semple, OTLA, updated that an amendment is forthcoming. The amendment is expected to raise the current "soft cap" for reimbursable costs from \$1,500 to \$3,500 indexing the amount to the state average weekly wage. He hoped the finalized amendment would be ready for vote at the next meeting.

Bill Presentations:

SB 606 and SB 705 -2 – Odalis Aguilar-Aguilar, AFSCME Political Coordinator

(00:32:02) Miles Palacios, Chief of Staff for Senator Campos, requested MLAC's support for the bill, explaining that it would expand eligibility for workers' compensation to include full-time paid employees at the Oregon State Hospital who have direct patient contact and Department of Human Services (DHS) employees working in Stabilization and Crisis Unit (SACU).

(00:33:46) Odalis Aguilar-Aguilar added that only public employers will be affected by this bill, and the insurers are neutral on the bill.

(00:34:33) Barbra Anderson, Oregon Ombudsman Office, confirmed that the Ombudsman Office fully supports the bill.

(00:35:05) A brief caucus was taken.

(00:35:27) Co-chair Strickland moved that MLAC table the SB 606 discussion to the next MLAC meeting, and Co-chair Priest seconded the motion. The motion passed.

SB 705 will also be discussed then. Co-chair Strickland encouraged written testimonies for the remaining bills

Meeting Co-chair Strickland adjourned the meeting at 11:31 a.m.
Adjourned

*These minutes include time stamps from the meeting video found here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A65Dva-9K0Y&feature=youtu.be>

**Referenced documents can be found on the MLAC Meeting Information page here:
<https://www.oregon.gov/DCBS/mlac/Pages/2025-meetings.aspx>