



**OREGON STATE SENATE**

March 11, 2016

Dear Workers' Compensation Board Members:

I've been told that you are currently reviewing the attorney fee schedule for fees paid out of workers' comp awards. I'm not sure if this is a regular review or part of the new direction given in last year's HB 2764 (2015). In either case, I hope that you will set the schedule at a high enough level to attract additional attorneys into this very specialized area of practice. That was our primary goal in passing HB 2764.

The Senate Workforce Committee heard very convincing testimony that workers are having a hard time finding skilled legal representation for their cases. In order to address that problem, the MLAC co-chairs provided us with a set of amendments that would, in their words, accomplish the following goals:

- *Creating meaningful change to address workers' access to legal representation.*
- *Ensuring attorney compensation covers the work and time invested on behalf of an injured worker, including the level of work attorneys must ethically perform and as part of an attorney's usual and customary services.*

We found their perspective and guidance very compelling.

I hope that this clarifies our legislative intent in finalizing and passing HB 2764. Please let me know if you have any further questions as you do your very important work.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Dembrow, Chair

Senate Committee on Workforce and General  
Government