

**Gregory B. Nokes**  
**Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee**  
**Opening Statement**

It is my privilege to be here today as Governor Rell's nominee to the Advisory Board of the Workers' Compensation Commission.

I am currently Vice President of Human Resources for Middlesex Health System, a position I have held since July of 2007. Prior to that I spent over 25 years in private law practice. Throughout that private practice I specialized in Labor & Employment matters, with the firm of Cummings & Lockwood from 1980-2003, and, following the merger of several of our practice groups, with McCarter & English from mid-2003 through mid-2007.

Throughout my private law practice, I represented employers in virtually all industries relative to the full spectrum of issues that can arise out of the workplace. These issues included workplace safety and health, leaves of absence, return-to-work limitations and procedures and the accommodation of disabilities, whether related to workplace injuries or otherwise. I enjoyed and continue to enjoy a constructive and professional relationship with representatives of employees and with the numerous state and federal agencies that regulate the various aspects of employment here in Connecticut.

Within MHS we employ 2,800 persons in a wide range of occupations, many of which directly impact patient as well as worker safety, and safety therefore is doubly important to our success. We operate 24 hours per day, every day, at our acute care hospital and at two separate 24 hour emergency centers, and we have significant outpatient surgery facilities, a large Homecare department, and an Emergency Medical Service. The spectrum of employment environments in which we operate is extremely broad, as are the safety issues that confront us.

My current responsibilities have given me an even broader perspective of the importance of workplace safety and preventive practices, as well as the many difficulties and challenges to effective worker rehabilitation. In addition to my responsibilities in Human Resources, our Occupational Medicine Department reports to me. It is one of only 4 in the state that is recognized as a full Occupational Health Clinic, and it operates closely with our Physical and Occupational therapy staff in treating persons injured either on or off the job.

I appreciate your attention today, and I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have for me.