

Questions for the Workers' Compensation Advisory Board Nominee

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WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSION ADVISORY BOARD ([CGS § 31-280a](#))

The Workers' Compensation Commission Advisory Board consists of eight members appointed by the governor and confirmed by both chambers of the General Assembly. Four members must represent employers, including a representative of a major hospital. Four members must represent employees, including an individual who has suffered an extensive disability arising from his or her employment. The eight appointed members choose a ninth impartial member who serves as the board's chairperson.

The chairperson of the Workers' Compensation Commission must consult with the board before adopting a budget, a plan of operations, or regulations to carry out the commission's duties. Among other things, the board must also (1) help evaluate each compensation commissioner's performance and submit recommendations for their re-appointment to the governor, (2) advise on the list of physicians available for examinations of injured workers, and (3) advise on standards for approval and removal of physicians on the list.

QUESTIONS

1. What experiences and background do you bring to this position that will help the state's workers' compensation commission function better?
2. Do you believe that the state's workers' compensation system is adequately addressing the needs of both injured workers and their employers?
3. By law, members of the advisory board are split between employer representatives and employee representatives. Do you believe that this allotment serves the overall workers' compensation system well?
4. Is fraud a problem in the workers' compensation system, and does the advisory board have a role in trying to prevent or limit it?
5. Many injured employees navigating the workers' compensation system complain that their employers and insurers create undue delays in processing their claims or approving necessary medical procedures. Do you feel that these types of complaints are often valid? If so, what can the advisory board and commission do to address them?
6. This session, the Labor Committee favorably reported a bill ([HB 6666](#)) that would allow injured employees to bring a civil suit against an insurer if they felt that the insurer was unduly delaying their claims or payments. Do you think this would help these employees? If the bill became law, how would it impact employers and the workers' compensation system in general?
7. Do you think the workers' compensation system should be doing more to help workers who suffer solely mental or emotional injuries in the workplace? Do you think the workers' compensation system, as presently constituted, is capable of handling these types of claims? What, if any, changes to the system would you recommend?
8. When board members interview compensation commissioners as part of the reappointment process, how should they evaluate whether a commissioner has done a good job? Does a board member who represents employers judge a compensation commissioner differently than one who represents employees? For what reasons, and under what circumstances, would you recommend a commissioner not be re-nominated? To what extent would you consider the broader implications of a commissioner's decisions?
9. Is the current number of commissioners sufficient to handle the state's caseload in a timely manner? How long does an average contested claim take to be resolved?

10. Are there a sufficient number of physicians currently participating and available for workers' compensation cases in the state? Does the state have any problems keeping enough physicians involved? What criteria and standards do you consider important when determining a physician's eligibility to be an independent examiner?
11. Connecticut's workers compensation insurance rates are typically among some of the most expensive in the nation. What role can the board play in trying to reduce or minimize workers compensation costs? How do you view the workers' compensation system's importance in contributing to the state's overall economic climate?

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