

December 2, 2016

Weekly Legislative Wrap-Up

State of the States



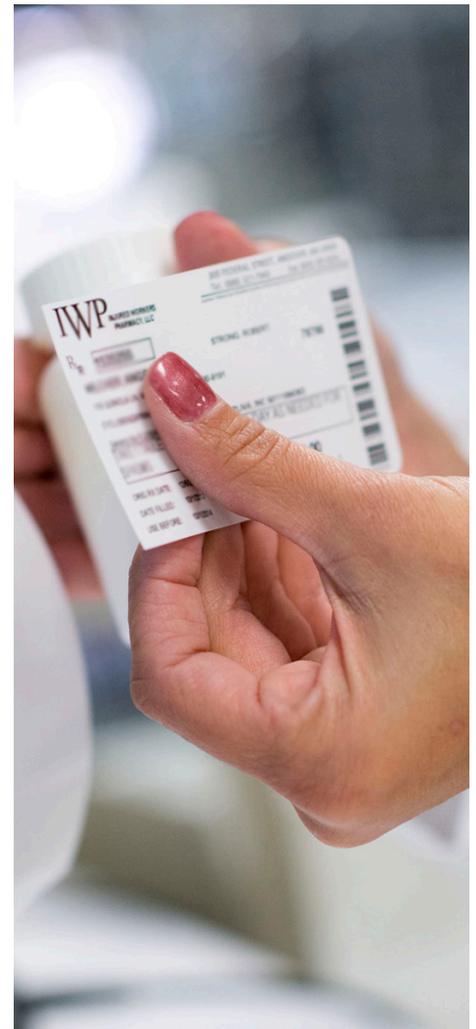
Republican Governor Rauner continues to push the legislature to make changes to the states'

workers' comp law to reduce employer costs. In response, House Democrats scheduled a hearing this week on a bill introduced, and never touched, over a year ago that includes many of the Governor's preferred changes. However, the hearing didn't do much, Republicans argued the bill was no longer relevant, negotiations had changed positions, and there was still work to be done. The state, which had no budget for almost two years, has a temporary budget in place that expires on December 31st, when they will again be forced to develop a budget in which workers' comp will continue to be a key negotiating point.



The week before a 14.5 percent rate increase was set to go into effect for Florida workers'

comp policies, a circuit court judge ruled that the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation (FOIR) and National Council on Compensation Insurance (NCCI) violated Florida law in setting the rate. Although the ruling stopped the rate hike temporarily, the FOIR filed an appeal which under state law allowed the rate increase to go into effect on December 1. The future of the dramatic rate increase, the result of Supreme Court cases overturning benefit and attorney fee caps, remains unclear.





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In a state hit hard by the opioid epidemic, state officials are sharing promising

[statistics](#) about the state's PDMP. A New Hampshire Public Radio report shows that since the implementation of the PDMP two years ago, prescriptions for narcotics are down 13 percent and incidents of doctor shopping are down two-thirds.



Thirty-eight former National Football League (NFL) players filed a [lawsuit](#) in federal court to

force the NFL to provide workers' compensation benefits for chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a disease that has been linked to head injuries. The lawsuit argues that the NFL violated federal health and safety guidelines by failing to warn players of the risks associated with CTE and encouraging players to head bang and use their helmets as a weapon.

Article of Interest

A new Workers' Compensation Research Institute (WCRI) [study](#) found that states without fee schedules as part of their workers' comp programs pay increased medical costs of more than 50 percent. Wisconsin came in at the top spot for highest prices for medical services, and Florida came in with the lowest prices as of Mid-2015.



Where in the U.S.A. is Jayne & Danielle?

Jayne and Danielle will be in New Orleans for the Democratic Governors Association Annual Meeting the first part of next week.



Questions, Concerns, Suggestions? Let Us Know.

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