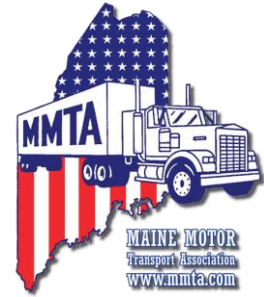


WORKERS' COMPENSATION LEGISLATION UPDATE – 6/5/19



While there hasn't been a lot of movement on the workers' compensation issue in Augusta, we can report that we feel progress is being made towards a final resolution. On Monday, Governor Mills invited a small group of stakeholders – that included MMTA – and elected leaders to the Blaine House to discuss points of agreement and to outline the issues of contention. She led the discussion and displayed a sincere desire to strike an acceptable balance. While a solid agreement was not reached, each participant committed to bringing some of the issues discussed back to their constituencies in an effort to find common ground.

All of this is to say that it is our belief that we are closer to an agreement than before the Governor's meeting, but sticking points remain. The Democrats and Labor will have to accept fewer benefit increases than those contained in the currently passed bill that would be excessively expensive to the system. The Republicans will have to accept a compromise bill that, while increases system costs, strikes a balance between the added cost, some system improvements and system predictability since the Governor has committed to not supporting any WC system changes for the remainder of her term(s). The business community will have to decide if the increase is affordable, especially considering the totality of all policy changes coming out of Augusta.

In summary, the Democrats have majorities in the House and Senate and can pass whatever **reasonable/unreasonable** bill they want regardless how expensive it is to the system. The Governor is in a tough spot because she will have to sign or veto the bill(s) if the Democrats pass legislation that is **reasonably/unreasonably** expensive. The Republicans have only one bargaining chip, which is the need to pass a 2/3 budget. They have indicated they would rather shut down state government than saddle the system, its businesses and eventually its employees, with a **reasonable/unreasonable** increase for a system that is not broken or imbalanced. To us, it boils down to what definition of "reasonable" wins out.

It is important to note that MMTA member calls/emails to elected leaders have been critical to our advocacy efforts. Some of the emails our members have sent have been nothing short of phenomenal; succinct, factual and effective. We have seen many responses, especially from Democrats, which means they understand the potential impact (cost for the system and politically for them) of this workers' comp. system reform effort. We encourage you to continue to reach out to your elected officials if you have not done so already. If you have, consider following up with them as frequency of communication is extremely effective – they need to hear about your concerns early and often.

So this update is really just a heads-up that there are a lot of moving parts and to let you know that things remain fluid due to budget negotiations. The good news is that both sides are talking and nobody has drawn a line in the sand which would make things really (really) messy going forward. Once we have more to report, we will send it along.

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR STATE SENATOR AND YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE – THOSE THAT REPRESENT WHERE YOU LIVE AND WHERE YOUR BUSINESS IS LOCATED!

Find your Senator by clicking [HERE](http://legislature.maine.gov/senate/find-your-state-senator/9392)
<http://legislature.maine.gov/senate/find-your-state-senator/9392>

Find your Representative by clicking [HERE](#)
<http://legislature.maine.gov/house/house/MemberProfiles/ListAlpha>

Contact Governor Mills by phone at (207) 287-3531 or through her online contact form [HERE](#)
<https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/contact>

When communicating with your elected officials, we ask that you copy MMTA (bparke@mta.com) so that we can gauge the volume and effectiveness of this call-to-action. If you talk with them, please let us know and then follow up with them so they know just how important this issue is to your business and your employees!