

To: The Honorable Members of the Pennsylvania House
Date: Dec. 4, 2017
Re: Support S.B. 936 to address prescription drug use among injured workers

From:

Associated Builders and Contractors
Associated Pennsylvania Constructors
Hospital & Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania
Insurance Federation of Pennsylvania
National Federation of Independent Business -- Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania Ambulance Association
Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials
Pennsylvania Boroughs Association
Pennsylvania Builders Association
Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry
Pennsylvania Coal Alliance
Pennsylvania Council of General Contractors
Pennsylvania Defense Institute
Pennsylvania Food Merchants Association
Pennsylvania Independent Oil & Gas Association
Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association
Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association
Pennsylvania Municipal League
Pennsylvania Occupational and Environmental Medical Society
Pennsylvania Pharmacists Association
Pennsylvania Restaurant and Lodging Association
Pennsylvania Retailers' Association
Pennsylvania School Boards Association
Pennsylvania Self-Insured Association
Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors
Pinnacle Treatment Centers
SMC Business Councils

We write in support of S.B. 936, legislation to improve Pennsylvania's workers' compensation system and outcomes for injured workers by 1) implementing a prescription drug formulary to streamline medication prescriptions and help patients avoid overuse and 2) helping ensure the quality of outside entities tasked with evaluating treatment decisions. The bill passed the Senate on Oct. 25 with bipartisan support and is pending in the House Labor and Industry Committee.

Common in other state workers' compensation systems and healthcare in general is utilization of a drug formulary, which organizes medication as either 'pre-approved' or 'requires authorization' based on FDA approval status, medical evidence and clinical research. This approach has helped states address overuse of and addiction to prescription drugs among injured workers. For example, Ohio implemented its formulary in 2011 and by 2014 the number of opioid prescriptions had

declined by 38 percent and **the number of workers' compensation patients considered opioid dependent was reduced by half.**

S.B. 936 also helps guarantee that Utilization Review Organizations are high quality. Questions regarding treatment or medication are currently referred to a URO selected by the Department and the bill would require UROs be certified in order to at least maintain the standard that exists in general healthcare. Guaranteeing high quality will instill greater confidence in decisions and complements the drug formulary by ensuring that qualified experts are holding all parties accountable to properly apply the formulary.

Both of these measures would improve outcomes for injured workers and continue the critical work of lawmakers and the Wolf Administration to combat the prescription drug and opioid epidemic. Pennsylvania struggles in this area particularly with respect to injured workers: PA ranked *third* in a recent study of opioid use among injured workers in the years 2012-2014, **measuring 78 percent higher than the median study state.** Other high-ranking states were New York and California, ranked second and fourth, respectively. New York passed formulary legislation earlier this year and California in 2015.

We urge you to support this bill, which will help injured workers in Pennsylvania avoid problems too often associated with prescription drug use and get healthy and back to full function and employment as soon as possible.