GOVERNOR BROWN SIGNS WORKERS’ COMP REFORM BILL

Governor Jerry Brown signed into law a landmark bill to reform California’s workers’ compensation system on September 18. Supported by both Democrats and Republicans – the new legislation is designed to reduce costs to businesses and protect workers by cutting out millions of dollars in waste from California’s workers’ compensation system. The bill, SB 863, was co-authored by Senator Kevin de Leon, D-Los Angeles and Assembly member Jose Solorio, D-Santa Ana.

In his recent blog posting, State Fund CEO and President Tom Rowe commended Brown’s administration and the Department of Industrial Relations for their efforts in working with labor and management to hammer out a balanced and meaningful reform.

The Division of Workers’ Compensation (DWC) held working groups to discuss regulation proposals.

The DWC’s chief legal counsel says the administration plans to publish emergency regulations by November, with a five-day public comment period on the emergency regulations. The formal rulemaking process then proceeds with a 45-day public comment period & public hearings. The administration has 180 days after the regulations are adopted on a temporary basis to complete the rulemaking process on permanent regulations.

Among the other actions on SB 863:

- The California Workers’ Compensation Institute (CWCI) will hold one-day seminars in Long Beach (10/15) and San Francisco (10/19) to educate industry professionals on the provisions and practical implementation issues related to SB 863.
- The Workers’ Comp Law section of the California State Bar will hold a webinar (10/30) on the impact of SB863.