

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

SENATE BILL NO. 496

91ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR SCHNEIDER.

Read 1st time February 15, 2001, and 1,000 copies ordered printed.

TERRY L. SPIELER, Secretary.

1997S.011

AN ACT

To repeal section 287.210, RSMo 2000, relating to workers' compensation, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to the same subject.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 287.210, RSMo 2000, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 287.210, to read as follows:

287.210. 1. After an employee has received an injury he shall from time to time thereafter during disability submit to reasonable medical examination at the request of the employer, his insurer, **the state if there is a second injury claim**, the commission, the division or an administrative law judge, the time and place of which shall be fixed with due regard to the convenience of the employee and his physical condition and ability to attend. The employee may have his own physician present, and if the employee refuses to submit to the examination, or in any way obstructs it, his right to compensation shall be forfeited during such period unless in the opinion of the commission the circumstances justify the refusal or obstruction.

2. The commission, the division or administrative law judge shall, when deemed necessary, appoint a duly qualified impartial physician to examine the injured employee, and any physician so chosen, if he accepts the appointment, shall promptly make the examination requested and make a complete medical report to the commission or the division in such duplication as to provide all parties with copies thereof. The physician's fee shall be fair and reasonable, as provided in

EXPLANATION--Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in this bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

subsection 3 of section 287.140, and the fee and other reasonable costs of the impartial examination may be [paid as other costs under this chapter] **assessed by the administrative law judge against any party and become immediately payable.** If all the parties shall have had reasonable access thereto, the report of the physician shall be admissible in evidence.

3. The testimony of any physician who treated or examined the injured employee shall be admissible in evidence in any proceedings for compensation under this chapter, but only if the medical report of the physician has been made available to all parties as in this section provided. Immediately upon receipt of notice from the division or the commission setting a date for hearing of a case in which the nature and extent of an employee's disability is to be determined, the parties or their attorneys shall arrange, without charge or costs, each to the other, for an exchange of all medical reports, including those made both by treating and examining physician or physicians, to the end that the parties may be commonly informed of all medical findings and opinions. The exchange of medical reports shall be made at least seven days before the date set for the hearing and failure of any party to comply may be grounds for asking for and receiving a continuance, upon proper showing by the party to whom the medical reports were not furnished. If any party fails or refuses to furnish the opposing party with the medical report of the treating or examining physician at least seven days before such physician's deposition or personal testimony at the hearing, as in this section provided, upon the objection of the party who was not provided with the medical report, the physician shall not be permitted to testify at that hearing or by medical deposition.

4. Upon request, an administrative law judge, the division, or the commission shall be provided with a copy of any medical report.

5. As used in this chapter the terms "physician's report" and "medical report" mean the report of any physician made on any printed form authorized by the division or the commission or any complete medical report. As used in this chapter the term "complete medical report" means the report of a physician giving the physician's qualifications and the patient's history, complaints, details of the findings of any and all laboratory, X-ray and all other technical examinations, diagnosis, prognosis, nature of disability, if any, and an estimate of the percentage of permanent partial disability, if any. An element or elements of a complete medical report may be met by the physician's records.

6. Upon the request of a party, the physician or physicians who treated or are treating the injured employee shall be required to furnish to the parties a rating and complete medical report on the injured employee, at the expense of the party selecting the physician, along with a complete copy of the physician's clinical record including copies of any records and reports received from other health care providers.

7. The testimony of a treating or examining physician may be submitted in evidence on the issues in controversy by a complete medical report and shall be admissible without other

foundational evidence subject to compliance with the following procedures. The party intending to submit a complete medical report in evidence shall give notice at least sixty days prior to the hearing to all parties and shall provide reasonable opportunity to all parties to obtain cross-examination testimony of the physician by deposition. The notice shall include a copy of the report and all the clinical and treatment records of the physician including copies of all records and reports received by the physician from other health care providers. The party offering the report must make the physician available for cross-examination testimony by deposition not later than seven days before the matter is set for hearing, and each cross-examiner shall compensate the physician for the portion of testimony obtained in an amount not to exceed a rate of reasonable compensation taking into consideration the specialty practiced by the physician. Cross-examination testimony shall not bind the cross-examining party. Any testimony obtained by the offering party shall be at that party's expense on a proportional basis, including the deposition fee of the physician. Upon request of any party, the party offering a complete medical report in evidence must also make available copies of X rays or other diagnostic studies obtained by or relied upon by the physician. Within ten days after receipt of such notice a party shall dispute whether a report meets the requirements of a complete medical report by providing written objections to the offering party stating the grounds for the dispute, and at the request of any party, the administrative law judge shall rule upon such objections upon pretrial hearing whether the report meets the requirements of a complete medical report and upon the admissibility of the report or portions thereof. If no objections are filed the report is admissible, and any objections thereto are deemed waived. Nothing herein shall prevent the parties from agreeing to admit medical reports or records by consent. [The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to claims against the second injury fund.]

8. Certified copies of the proceedings before any coroner holding an inquest over the body of any employee receiving an injury in the course of his employment resulting in death shall be admissible in evidence in any proceedings for compensation under this chapter, and it shall be the duty of the coroner to give notice of the inquest to the employer and the dependents of the deceased employee, who shall have the right to cross-examine the witness.

9. The division or the commission may in its discretion in extraordinary cases order a postmortem examination and for that purpose may also order a body exhumed.