

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

SENATE BILL NO. 982

89TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR SCHNEIDER.

Read 1st time February 26, 1998, and 1,000 copies ordered printed.

TERRY L. SPIELER, Secretary.

S4032.011

AN ACT

To repeal section 287.160, RSMo 1994, 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Section A. Section 287.160, RSMo 1994, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 287.160, to read as follows:

287.160. 1. Except as provided in section 287.140, no compensation shall be payable for the first three regularly scheduled work days or less of disability unless the disability shall last longer than fourteen days. If the disability lasts longer than fourteen days, payment for the first three days shall be made retroactively to the claimant.

2. Compensation shall be payable as the wages were paid prior to the injury, but in any event at least once every two weeks. If an injured employee claims benefits pursuant to this section, an employer may, if the employee agrees in writing, pay directly to the employee any benefits due pursuant to section 287.170. The employer shall continue such payments until the insurer starts making the payments or the claim is contested by any party. Where the claim is found to be compensable the employer's workers' compensation insurer shall indemnify the employer for any payments made pursuant to this subsection. If the employee's claim is found to be fraudulent or noncompensable, after a hearing, the employee shall reimburse the employer, or the insurer if the insurer has indemnified the employer, for any benefits received either by a:

- (1) Lump sum payment;
- (2) Refund of the compensation equivalent of any accumulated sick or disability leave;
- (3) Payroll deduction; or

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

(4) Secured installment plan. If the employee is no longer employed by such employer, the employer may garnish the employee's wages or execute upon any property, except real estate, of the employee. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require any employer to make payments directly to the employee.

3. Where weekly benefit payments that are not being contested by the employer or his insurer are due, and if such weekly benefit payments are made more than [thirty] **ten** days after becoming due, the weekly benefit payments that are late shall be increased by ten percent simple interest per annum **from the date when due until paid**. Provided, however, that if such claim for weekly compensation is contested by the employee, and the employer or his insurer have not paid the disputed weekly benefit payments or lump sum within [thirty] **ten** days of when the administrative law judge's order becomes final, or from the date of a decision by the labor and industrial relations commission, or from the date of the last judicial review, whichever is later, interest on such disputed weekly benefit payments or lump sum so ordered, shall be increased by ten percent simple interest per annum beginning [thirty] **ten** days from the date of such order. Provided, however, that if such claims for weekly compensation are contested solely by the employer or insurer, no interest shall be payable until after [thirty] **ten** days after the award of the administrative law judge. The state of Missouri or any of its political subdivisions, as an employer, is liable for any such interest assessed against it for failure to promptly pay on any award issued against it under this chapter.

4. [Insurers, self-insured employers and self-insured groups of employers shall submit regularly to the division a "Timeliness of Payment Report" for all injuries that result in four or more lost work days, and the division shall publish annually a "Report of Payment Performance" which shall include the payment performance of all insurers and self-insurers. The report shall also include, but not be limited to, information on the number of injuries, by insurer or self-insurer, that result in a claim being filed by an injured worker. The provisions of this subsection shall expire on August 28, 1996.] **The interest on benefit payments provided for in this section shall be increased or decreased on an annual basis effective January first of each year in accordance with the Implicit Price Deflator for Personal Consumption Expenditures as published by the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the United States Department of Commerce. The current interest on benefit payments shall be calculated by the director of the department of labor and industrial relations, who shall furnish that value to the secretary of state, who shall publish such value in the Missouri Register as soon after each January first as practicable, but it shall otherwise be exempt from the provisions of section 536.021, RSMo.**

5. Compensation shall be payable in accordance with the rules given in sections 287.170, 287.180, 287.190, 287.200, 287.240, and 287.250.

6. The employer shall not be entitled to credit for wages or such pay benefits paid to the

employee or his dependents on account of the injury or death except as provided in section 287.270.

✓

Unofficial

Bill

Copy