

To: Management/Labor Advisor Committee
From: Scott Winkels, League of Oregon Cities
Date: 4/10/21
Re: Opposition to 801 -2

Thank you for leaving the record open to allow for additional testimony and the I regret the technical difficulties that did not allow for verbal testimony.

I am writing to express opposition to the -2 to amendment to SB 801. After careful review of the amendment language the LOC concludes that establishing a taskforce to investigate the listed concerns is unnecessary and counterproductive. ORS 656.790 states that MLAC "...may study such aspects of the law as the committee shall determine require their consideration." Claims processing procedures and concerns workers have about filing claims are within the general scope of MLAC and should not be delegated to another entity.

Besides having the legal authority to undertake the work, MLAC has the ability and wherewithal for the task. The LOC has participated in the MLAC process on issues that were administratively, scientifically, and emotionally complex. While the outcomes may not have left all interests satisfied, the outcomes were reasonable and creditable. Controversial and complicated issues are in the MLAC wheelhouse and realm of experience.

Moreover, MLAC is comprised of members with expertise and experience in workers compensation. Having that expertise introduces a rigor into the process. If the League were to seek resolution to matters as complicated as envisioned in the -2 with the potential for a legislative remedy, we would want that to be vetted by the recognized issues experts as opposed to a temporary commission.

As employers, the LOC does not wish to shy away from answers to the questions proposed in the -2 amendment. If employees are being discouraged from filing claims or workers injured or made ill on the job, that should be addressed. But the conversations should take place in the venue created for this purpose as opposed to creating a new one.