



*The Big Sky Country*

## MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**REPRESENTATIVE CHUCK HUNTER**  
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September 29, 2010

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To: Dick Brown, Montana Hospital Association  
Erin McLean, for the Montana Medical Association  
Lieutenant Governor John Bohlinger for the Labor Management Advisory Council  
Jerry Keck, Department of Labor and Industry

Cc: Margaret Morgan, Rehabilitation Association of Montana  
Mark Staples, Montana Chiropractic Association

As you know, the Economic Affairs Advisory Council (EAIC) voted to adopt the Labor Management Advisory Committees' (LMAC) proposal on revising Montana workers' compensation laws as a committee bill at its August meeting. At the September EAIC meeting, after hearing concerns raised by the medical community about the proposed restructuring of medical fees, the committee adopted a motion to work with the parties to see if those concerns could be addressed. I was assigned sponsorship of the bill, and was asked to work with the parties prior to the session.

I have informally discussed the issue with all of the parties over the past few weeks, and have decided to hold several meetings between the affected groups. I am inviting you and other representatives of your group to join a workgroup on this issue. The first meeting will be held on October 19<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 A.M. until noon. I expect a limited number of meetings, and a completion date for our work no later than December 1<sup>st</sup>.

The purpose of our 1<sup>st</sup> meeting will be to work on getting on the same page regarding the financial data underlying the LMAC proposal. The LMAC proposal was based upon financial data generated by the Department of Labor and its financial consultant. Other parties have suggested that the Department's data does not mesh with their own. We will attempt to reconcile the data differences as the 1<sup>st</sup> step of our process. I see the first meeting largely as an exchange of data and a review of the areas where the parties have different views of that data.

It will be helpful in advance of the meeting to have each of your groups share the requests they have for data from other parties, and to describe what data each group plans to bring. To that end, I ask each of you to communicate what data your group would like to see from others to Pat Murdo, who staffs the EAIC, by October 11<sup>th</sup>. Pat will serve as the collection point for these requests, and will pass them along to the proper parties.

The agenda of our 1<sup>st</sup> meeting will entail discussion of the data requests, resolving what data issues we can, and identifying areas for further study if needed. We will also provide the opportunity for the parties to discuss their proposals for fee schedule changes.

The workgroup will not be expected to make decisions about the bill. If some changes regarding the bill rise to a level of agreement, I expect those issues to be taken to the LMAC, and for the LMAC to take any formal action on them. I am empowered on behalf of the EAIC to consider adding any agreements to our committee bill, which I will consider after any LMAC decisions. Please be aware that the efforts of our workgroup are not in lieu of the Department of Labors' rule making process regarding fee schedules or treatment guidelines.

To make our workgroup more productive, I am asking each of you to limit your workgroup membership to no more than four representatives. Please let Pat Murdo ([pmurdo@mt.gov](mailto:pmurdo@mt.gov)) know who your members will be by October 11th, and she will pass the list on to the other parties.

We will meet in room 137 of the Capitol Building. Thank you for your participation in this effort, and I look forward to seeing you on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

Sincerely,



Representative Chuck Hunter