



Workers' Compensation Committee of Alaska

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February 2, 2016

Senator Peter Micciche
State Capitol, Room 514
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Senate Bill 119

Dear Senator Micciche:

WCCA is an employer advocacy committee for workers compensation issues. We are writing to respectfully request that you consider amending SB 119 so it reads similar to what the State of Montana did with the language below:

39-71-2904. Direct appeal to supreme court. Notwithstanding [2-4-701](#) through [2-4-704](#), an appeal from a final decision of the workers' compensation judge shall be filed directly with the supreme court of Montana in the manner provided by law for appeals from the district court in civil cases.

Appeals are costly and employers wish to avoid paying high fees and costs to both the employee's and employer's attorneys on two appeals, one to the Superior Court and one to the Supreme Court. Additionally, there can be delays of up to two years following a board decision while an appeal is proceeding through both the Superior and the Supreme Court. This, of course, results in a significant delay of benefits that might be awarded to the employee if the appeal stems from a denial of benefits and is reversed. There would also be accumulating interest on those benefits which the employer would have to pay.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact us if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Chuck Brady
President