

Hoffman to chair committee of the whole on compensation for injured workers

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SPRINGFIELD – State Rep. Jay Hoffman, D-Swansea, will serve as chairman of Tuesday's committee of the whole in the House of Representatives to discuss the compensation of workers who are injured on the job due to no fault of their own.

“Workers’ compensation is a system that protects working men and women and shields businesses from expensive lawsuits,” Hoffman said. “Before we move forward with proposals to change the compensation that workers receive after an injury on the job, we have to consider the impact on the financial security of lower income and middle-class families whose livelihoods are affected. Without an adequate compensation system for injured workers, families throughout Illinois will suffer and taxpayers will end up paying the bill.”

The committee of the whole will include discussion about a 2011 workers’ compensation reform law aimed at lowering employer costs and insurance rates, and the differences between Illinois’ workers’ compensation system and the systems of other states. Previously Hoffman, as Chair of the House Labor and Commerce Committee, held hearings on this topic before that Committee.

According to a study by the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services, between 2012 and 2014, Illinois saw a 24 percent reduction in workers’ compensation rates, the largest reduction in the country. Hoffman wants to ensure that any further changes to workers’ compensation laws are balanced between workers’ protections and the ability of Illinois businesses to compete with other states.

“I understand and support changes that will reduce the burden on businesses and allow them to be competitive, but for workers who are injured, to suddenly be without a job and an income is financially devastating,” Hoffman said. “The committee of the whole will give every member of the House the opportunity to participate in the discussion on this important issue.”

Hoffman represents Illinois’ 113th Representative District, which includes all or portions of Belleville, Brooklyn, Caseyville, Fairmont City, Fairview Heights, Granite City, Madison, Shiloh, Swansea, Venice and Washington Park.