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KASICH SIGNS BWC AND INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION BUDGETS

COLUMBUS – Today Gov. John R. Kasich signed House Bill 123 (Hottinger) and House Bill 124 (Hottinger), legislation setting appropriations for the Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) and Industrial Commission (IC) for fiscal years 2012 and 2013. Both bills received broad bipartisan support in the House and Senate.

Kasich was joined for the bill-signing ceremony by BWC Administrator Stephen Buehrer, IC Executive Director Tim Adams, bill sponsor Rep. Jay Hottinger, Rep. Bob Hackett and Sen. Kevin Bacon.

Bureau of Workers' Compensation Budget

The BWC is funded through assessments charged to employers rather than through general revenue funds. HB 123 decreases appropriations from $657.6 million (FY 2010-2011) to $578.9 million (FY 2012-2013), meaning that with the passage of HB 123, the burden on job creators will be reduced by $78.7 million. Additionally, there are several key provisions in HB 123 that clarify ambiguous language and simplify current procedures, such as:

- Allowing the Administrator to waive criteria certain public employers must satisfy to become self-insuring employers;
- Reducing the time for submission of medical bills to one year, with exceptions for Medicare and by BWC rule;
- Modify and modernize language that currently uses pension terms that are not accurate for BWC actuarial analyses;
- Reducing the biannual reporting requirements for the Health Partnership Program to annually in order save time and resources while providing a transparent picture of BWC in one document

Industrial Commission Budget

The Industrial Commission, like the BWC, is funded by a portion of employer workers' compensation premiums. The IC budget approved through HB 124 is nearly seven percent less than the FY 2011 budget. Though the use of technology, greater efficiency, and smarter resource allocation, the IC has been able to cut costs and maintain service levels, ultimately decreasing premiums on employers.

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