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## **NH Insurance Commissioner Leads Workers' Compensation Commission**

**Concord, NH** – New Hampshire Insurance Commissioner Roger Sevigny today chaired the first meeting of the Commission to Recommend Reforms to Reduce Workers' Compensation Medical Costs. The commission was created by Governor Maggie Hassan earlier this month in response to the Insurance Department's announcement that workers' compensation medical fees in New Hampshire are significantly higher than those in other states.

The commission has been asked to review state data, analyze other states' efforts to lower workers' compensation costs, and develop recommendations to reduce costs and premiums while ensuring that injured workers have access to quality care. The commission's final report to Governor Hassan is due Dec. 1.

Commissioner Sevigny heads the group, which consists of Brian Allen of HELIOS; Donald Baldini of Liberty Mutual Insurance; Pamela Bronson of Access Sports Medicine & Orthopedics; Paul Chant of Cooper Cargill Chant; Tammy Denver of NH Public Risk Management Exchange; Edward Dudley of Catholic Medical Center; Mark Erdody of Cove Risk Services, LLC; Marc Lacroix of the New Hampshire Physical Therapy Association and Concord Hospital; David Lang of the Professional Firefighters of NH; Mark Mackenzie of the NH AFL-CIO; Peter McNamara of the NH Automobile Dealers Association; Dr. Gregory Soghikian of New Hampshire Orthopaedic Center; and Ben Wilcox of Cranmore Mountain Resort.

Governor Hassan thanked members of the commission at the start of the meeting.

"We are going through a tremendous change in health care ... and one of the things we really looked at is that from the state's perspective, we pay significantly more in workers' compensation costs," she said. "That's money that gets spent that could, in theory, be spent on other things that we care about. What we're looking for is to understand what's driving costs. I am really looking forward to following your work."

New Hampshire went from being listed as the 14<sup>th</sup> most expensive state for workers' compensation in the country in 2008 to the 9<sup>th</sup> most expensive in 2012, according to the Oregon Workers Compensation Rate Ranking Study.

Deb Stone, the Insurance Department's director of financial regulation, told commission members that in New Hampshire, almost three-fourths of the costs of workers' compensation claim dollars are paid out for medical costs, as opposed to 60 percent nationwide.

"Our medical costs are high and rising," she said.

Members of the public are welcome to attend commission meetings. More information, as well as meeting minutes, may be found online: <http://www.governor.nh.gov/media/news/2014/pr-2014-09-04-workers-compensation-commission.htm>.

The New Hampshire Insurance Department's mission is to promote and protect the public good by ensuring the existence of a safe and competitive insurance marketplace through the development and enforcement of the insurance laws of the State of New Hampshire. For more information, visit [www.nh.gov/insurance](http://www.nh.gov/insurance).

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