

December 16, 2016

Weekly Legislative Wrap-Up

State of the States



On Tuesday the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee attended a [presentation](#) on

the status of the state's workers' comp system and discussion about possible legislative fixes dominated the meeting. All sides disagree on how to reform the system, but Senate President Joe Negrón indicated the legislature will examine the entire system in deciding its next steps. Business groups want to reduce money going to claimant attorneys, claimant attorneys want to force insurers to properly pay claims, and labor wants to make sure benefits are further reduced. The last major overhaul of the system was in 2003.



Starting January 1, the Department of Workers' Comp will begin [suspending](#)

providers who have committed a felony or misdemeanor involving fraud or abuse in the Medicaid, Medicare or Workers' Comp programs, or any fraud or abuse of a patient. The state's workers' comp system has been plagued by fraud and abuse for years and these new rules are a result of AB 1244 being signed into law by the Governor back in September.



A new CDC [report](#) shows that deaths related to heroin now surpass gun related homicides. The uptick in heroin deaths is related to the increase in prescription painkillers, specifically opioids. Deaths from synthetic opioids, including fentanyl, rose 73% in 2015.



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In the four years since the Sandy Hook shooting, the Connecticut legislature has considered a bill

that would extend workers' comp benefits to cover mental health treatment for first responders of the massacre. Each year, the bill fails to move. Now a new [report](#) finds that those first responders, as well as others effected by the shooting, are getting mental health treatment through millions of dollars in donations.



A new [report](#) issued by the Illinois Policy Institute examines how Illinois' state employee workers' comp program

is costing taxpayers more than \$400 million a year. Among the reasons are state court rulings that created one of the country's most expensive workers' comp programs, significantly more expensive than its neighboring Midwestern states, and the massive size of the Illinois public sector workforce, coming in at around 628,000 employees.

Where in the U.S.A. is Jayne & Danielle?
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Jayne and Danielle will be in the home office preparing for the 2017 legislative session.



Questions, Concerns, Suggestions? Let Us Know.
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