

December 9, 2016

Weekly Legislative Wrap-Up

State of the States



California is already starting their 2017 legislative session with a December

organizational session during which [AB 44](#), was introduced. The bill would expedite claims filed as a result of a terrorist attack or workplace violence. The bill is in response to recent claims by San Bernardino victims that bureaucracy has been preventing them from getting needed treatment for their injuries.



This week Governor Baker [announced](#) a voluntary pilot program for

injured workers currently on opioids in Massachusetts. The program is targeting injured

workers who have settled their claims but remain on opioid treatment plans that the insurer would like to stop payment on. Normally, such a disagreement could take years to settle but the pilot program strives to resolve the issue quicker and get injured workers access to other forms of pain management.

Another legislative session, and another [attempt](#) to adopt a prescription drug monitoring program in Missouri, the



only state in the country without one. Last week, two bills were pre-filed for the 2017 session in the General Assembly that would establish a prescription drug monitoring program for the state. The legislative session starts on January 4th.





State of the States



Just a month before the start of the session and legislators are already beginning their work on

workers' compensation. This week new legislative members attending briefings to provide an overview of the workers' comp system and recent developments, and next week the Senate Banking and Insurance committee will have a presentation on the status of the state system. Also this week, a freshman house legislator released a proposal that would make workers' comp coverage optional for businesses in the state. Workers' comp is expected to be a hot issue in the 2017 session after two Supreme Court decisions this year that resulted in a 14.5% rate increase.



In a rare showing of unified support, Congress passed the 21st Century Cures Act bill this week. The measure aims

to fund biomedical research and speed approval of new drugs, but also provides states with new tools to combat the opioid epidemic. \$1 billion in funds will be dispersed to all 50 states in the next two years, with preference given to those states most impacted by the opioid epidemic. Among its provisions, the bill will help fund opioid abuse treatment programs bolster PDMPs, and improving prescribing practices. The bill is now awaiting President Obama's signature.

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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