

Alaska State Legislature  
House Labor and Commerce Committee  
120 E. 4th St., Juneau, AK 99801

2/3/14

*Sent via electronic transmission to: [Rep.Kurt.Olson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Kurt.Olson@akleg.gov);  
[Rep.Lora.Reinbold@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Lora.Reinbold@akleg.gov)*

**RE: HB 141, Workers' Compensation, Fees for Medical Treatment and Services -  
NAMIC's Written Testimony in Support of Proposed Legislation**

Dear Representative Kurt Olson, Chair; Representative Lora Reinbold, Vice Chair; and members of the House Labor and Commerce Committee:

Thank you for providing the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (NAMIC) an opportunity to submit written testimony to your committee for the February 3, 2014, public hearing. Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend the public hearing, because of a previously scheduled professional obligation.

NAMIC is the largest property/casualty insurance trade association in the country, serving regional and local mutual insurance companies on main streets across America as well as many of the country's largest national insurers.

The 1,400 NAMIC member companies serve more than 135 million auto, home and business policyholders and write more than \$196 billion in annual premiums, accounting for 50 percent of the automobile/homeowners market and 31 percent of the business insurance market. NAMIC has 85 members who write property/casualty and workers' compensation insurance in the State of Alaska, which represents 41% of the insurance marketplace.

Through our advocacy programs we promote public policy solutions that benefit NAMIC companies and the consumers we serve. Our educational programs enable us to become better leaders in our companies and the insurance industry for the benefit of our policyholders.

NAMIC supports HB 141 as a reasonable and appropriate step toward greater workers' compensation reform in the State of Alaska. Employers and injured workers benefit from a workers' compensation system that has measured and balanced cost-containment rules in place to prevent over-inflated pricing of medical treatment and services, and an administrative system that has procedural rules that expedite and economize the processing of workers' compensation claims.

HB 141 specifically accomplishes these objectives by requiring that medical treatment or services performed outside the state conform to the pricing guidelines in the workers' compensation statute in the state where the services were rendered, and by requiring the prompt submission of bills by the medical provider to the employer within 180 days after the date the treatment or services are rendered. The bill also requires medical providers to file any appeal on workers' compensation decisions on medical fees and charges within a reasonable period of time (60 days after medical provider receives notice of the denial or reduction of medical bill) to avoid the untimely filing of old claims, which unnecessarily add administrative costs and burdens to the workers' compensation claims system.

For the aforementioned reasons, NAMIC respectfully requests that committee members **VOTE YES on HB 141.**

Thank you for your time and consideration of NAMIC's written testimony. Please feel free to contact me at 303.907.0587 or at [crataj@namic.org](mailto:crataj@namic.org), if you have any questions pertaining to my written testimony.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Christian J. Rataj".

Christian J. Rataj, Esq.  
NAMIC's Senior Director - State Affairs  
Western Region