

SENATE LABOR COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 782

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 10, 2018

The Senate Labor Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 782.

This bill increases the amount of workers' compensation paid in certain cases for the loss of a hand, or thumb and first and second fingers (on one hand) or four fingers (on one hand) or a foot, as follows:

1. If a loss of function of a hand is determined to be a 25% or more loss of use, the award of workers' compensation shall be calculated based on a maximum of 300 weeks of compensation for a 100% loss of function; and

2. If a loss of function of a foot is determined to be a 25% or more loss of use, the award of workers' compensation shall be calculated based on a maximum of 275 weeks of compensation for a 100% loss of function.

Under current law, the maximum award for the loss of a hand is 245 weeks and the maximum award for the loss of a foot is 230 weeks.

The bill also requires the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development to study, in consultation with the Commissioner of Banking and Insurance, the State's workers' compensation system and make recommendations that will help foster and maintain an efficient, effective and well-balanced workers' compensation program that is equally responsive to the needs of both the State's workforce and the employer community. The commissioner will submit a study, with recommendations, to the Governor and the Legislature not later than one year after the effective date of this bill and every five years thereafter.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2018-2019 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.