

MICHAEL E. BUSCH
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

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The Maryland House of Delegates

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

May 24, 2018

Mr. R. Karl Aumann
Chairman
Maryland Workers' Compensation Commission
10 East Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21202-1641

Dear Chairman Aumann:

I have received several inquiries concerning a group known as the Workers' Compensation Research Institute (WCRI). One of the inquiries has come from a Speaker in another state.

Apparently, there was a situation in Maryland where your Commission conducted a survey which ended up with contrary conclusions to the findings of a WCRI study. Your Commission's conclusions resulted in a two-year moratorium in 2015 and 2016 on legislation to restrict the dispensing of medicines by Maryland physicians.

It seems that WCRI had concluded that over 40% of the workers' compensation medicines were being dispensed by physician offices and that percentage was climbing. However, according to the Joint Committee on Workers' Compensation Insurance and Benefit Oversight (letter attached), your Commission concluded that the true number was 15.7% and that percentage was falling.

This issue of physician dispensing had resulted in legislative battles in 2012, 2013 and 2014. Since the time of the two year moratorium (2015 and 2016) no legislation was filed in either 2017 or 2018. My conclusion is that your Commission's study effectively ended the introduction of bills on this issue which had been initiated because of information from WCRI.

I would like to know if this information is correct and whether the Commission is a member of WCRI or has been a member of WCRI and, if no longer a member, the reasons for dropping that membership.

Thank you for your assistance.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael E. Busch".

Michael E. Busch
Speaker