

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BILL RECEIVES AMENDMENTS ON HOUSE FLOOR

■(GIT) HB2430, a workers' compensation bill amending language pertaining to workers' compensation, received an amendment by Rep. Don Kinnamon, D-Stroud, stating that the burden of proof for any claim for compensation under the Workers' Compensation Act shall be on the employee. "The burden of proof for accidental injuries arising out of and in the course of employment shall be preponderance of the evidence."

The bill also states that injury from combat that occurs in the workplace and injuries sustained while under the intoxication of drugs or alcohol shall not be compensated.

The amendment passed 74 to 20.

Rep. Bill Smith, D-Ringling, proposed an amendment that would make mediation the mandated first choice for both parties before going to court. However, if the claim could not be rectified through mediation, court would be the alternative.

Rep. Chris Hastings, R-Tulsa, proposed an amendment to the amendment to "clear up Smith's amendment." The amendment states that a person injured on the job should receive treatment before the mediation.

An amendment by the bill's author, Rep. Bill Settle, D-Muskogee, stated that the Insurance Commissioner shall provide a plan to jump-start the pilot program for 24-hour care coverage by January 1998.

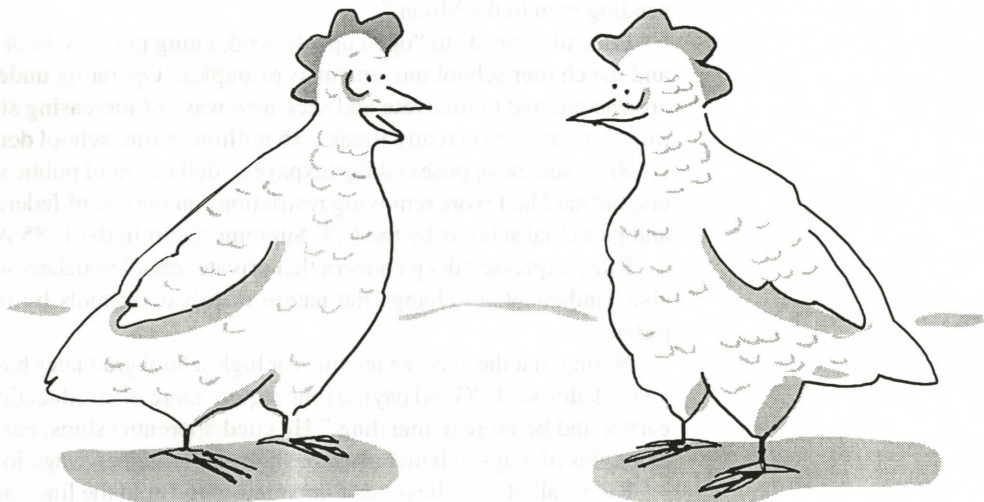
Rep. James Hager, D-Pawhuska, proposed an amendment that would not allow insurance companies to retroactively assess employers regardless of past status.

Hager's amendment was tabled.

The bill passed with an unanimous vote of 101 to 0.

FROM: MARTA MCCLOSKEY

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"With Perdue and Tyson both downsizing,
we'll be old hens before we get another job"