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### **Calls for reduced premiums misplaced**

Improved benefits for injured Victorian workers ought be the priority of both the State political parties rather than reduced employer premiums, Australian Lawyers Alliance (ALA) Victorian WorkCover spokesman Richard Morrow said today.

Calls by the Australian Industry Group for a further premium reduction for employers ought be rejected, Mr Morrow said.

"The State Government has already given employers premium reductions of 30% over the last four years whilst the improvement to benefits for injured workers has been only marginal," Mr Morrow said.

Injured workers are continuing to miss out in the following ways;

- Many hundreds of seriously injured Victorian workers are thrown off weekly payments and onto Social Security after 130 weeks each year even though they are unable to return to the workforce.
- The tough 40% loss of earning capacity test to access Common Law Damages is unfair as even a "theoretical" job rather than a real one being available causes a worker to miss out.
- Even for those workers who are entitled to damages, the Act forces them to pay 20% of the legal costs incurred -which may add up to tens of thousands of dollars- unlike all other successful parties in litigation.

With WorkCover making in excess of one billion dollars profit, and employers having already received cuts in premium as a gift, it's time for those struggling with workplace injuries to get some of the benefits.

ENDS

**The Australian Lawyers Alliance, is the leading advocate of the rights of individual litigants in the justice system.**

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