

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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SENATE BILL 996

Short Title: Workers' Comp Annual COLA.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senators Berger of Franklin; Kinnaird and Snow.

Referred to: Judiciary I (Civil).

March 20, 2007

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENTS IN WORKERS'
COMPENSATION FOR EMPLOYEES WHO ARE PERMANENTLY AND
TOTALLY DISABLED.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 97-29 reads as rewritten:

"§ 97-29. Compensation rates for total incapacity.

(a) Except as hereinafter otherwise provided, where the incapacity for work resulting from the injury is total, the employer shall pay or cause to be paid, as hereinafter provided, to the injured employee during such total disability a weekly compensation equal to sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66 2/3%) of his average weekly wages, but not more than the amount established annually to be effective October 1 as provided herein, nor less than thirty dollars (\$30.00) per week.

(b) In cases of total and permanent disability, compensation, including medical compensation, shall be paid for by the employer during the lifetime of the injured employee. If death results from the injury then the employer shall pay compensation in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 97-38.

(c) The weekly compensation payment for members of the North Carolina national guard and the North Carolina State Defense Militia shall be the maximum amount established annually in accordance with the last paragraph of this section per week as fixed herein. The weekly compensation payment for deputy sheriffs, or those acting in the capacity of deputy sheriffs, who serve upon a fee basis, shall be thirty dollars (\$30.00) a week as fixed herein.

(d) An officer or member of the State Highway Patrol shall not be awarded any weekly compensation under the provisions of this section for the first two years of any incapacity resulting from an injury by accident arising out of and in the course of the performance by him of his official duties if, during such incapacity, he continues to be an officer or member of the State Highway Patrol, but he shall be awarded any other benefits to which he may be entitled under the provisions of this Article.

1 (e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Article, on July 1 of each year, a
2 maximum weekly benefit amount shall be computed. The amount of this maximum
3 weekly benefit shall be derived by obtaining the average weekly insured wage in
4 accordance with G.S. 96-8(22), by multiplying such average weekly insured wage by
5 1.10, and by rounding such figure to its nearest multiple of two dollars (\$2.00), and this
6 said maximum weekly benefit shall be applicable to all injuries and claims arising on
7 and after January 1 following such computation. Such maximum weekly benefit shall
8 apply to all provisions of this Chapter and shall be adjusted July 1 and effective January
9 1 of each year as herein provided.

10 (f) As of December 31 of each year, the ratio of the Consumer Price Index to
11 such index one year earlier shall be determined. If this ratio indicates an increase that
12 equals or exceeds three percent (3%), each employee receiving compensation for total
13 and permanent disability as of December 31 of the previous year shall be entitled to
14 have this compensation increased three percent (3%) effective July 1 of the following
15 year."

16 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective December 31, 2007.