



# S.1023 (Ramos) / A.1098 (Bronson)

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<b>BILL</b> S.1023 (Ramos) / A.1098 (Bronson)
<b>SUBJECT</b> Allows Certain Claimants to be Reclassified as Permanent Total Disability or Total Industrial Disability Due to Extreme Hardship
<b>DATE</b> May 10, 2022
<b>OPPOSE</b>

The Business Council is deeply concerned with a number of bills that have been introduced and are at various stages of the legislative process in both houses. Each of these bills represents further expansion of the workers' compensation system and a proliferation of costs to employers. In 2017, the Legislature acted to amend the workers' compensation system. The reform was fair and balanced and offered a modest savings to employers while expanding access to benefits to the most injured workers. These bills ignore those efforts and would act to not only reverse those modest savings but once again send the workers' compensation system down the path of spiraling cost increases year after year.

Accordingly, The Business Council opposes S.1023 (Ramos)/A.6117 (Bronson). The workers' compensation board currently defines extreme hardship as the inability to meet household bills considering the injured worker's income as well as that of other household members. This bill redefines extreme hardship by lowering the threshold for lost wage-earning capacity to 50% from its current 75%.

This is nothing other than an attempt to use the employer-funded workers' compensation system to provide a supplemental income to a special group of benefit recipients. This is clearly not part of the "Grand Bargain" of workers' compensation and rolls back the recent successful reforms of the compensation system agreed upon in 2007 and 2017.

We suggest the sponsors find other ways to supplement the income of low-income New Yorkers other than on the backs of employers already burdened by the most expensive workers' compensation system in the country. Especially as these businesses try to survive the greatest economic upheaval in the past 90 years.

For these reasons, The Business Council, on behalf of its more than 2,300 members opposes this bill.