Resolution Opposing Ergonomic Regulations Based on Unsound Science

Summary

Some states and the federal government are experimenting with regulations which they believe will reduce back, arm, neck and other musculoskeletal strains and aches, often referred to as “repetitive stress injuries” (RSI’s). The Resolution Opposing Ergonomic Regulations Based on Unsound Science recognizes that ergonomic regulations should not be mandated until such regulations are proven to actually reduce or prevent RSI’s by sound scientific evidence.

Model Resolution

WHEREAS there is no consensus in the medical and scientific communities on the causes or remedies for the general area of back, arm, neck and other musculoskeletal strains and aches, often referred to as “repetitive stress injuries” (RSI’s); and

WHEREAS one’s likelihood of suffering an RSI may be linked to any one of or combination of factors, including the improper use of equipment, a person’s general fitness, vitamin in-take, job satisfaction or level of stress at home; and

WHEREAS the only medical and scientific consensus that exists when it comes to ergonomics is that more research is needed; and

WHEREAS any ergonomic regulations would be based on unsound science; and

WHEREAS ergonomic regulations would mandate costly experimental engineering controls in the workplace with no assurance they would prevent any injuries; and

WHEREAS ergonomic regulations would result in increased costs to small and large employers documented to be in the billions of dollars with no guaranteed benefits to employees; and

WHEREAS state ergonomic regulations would place businesses in that state at a competitive disadvantage to businesses in other states; and

WHEREAS RSI’s comprise less than 4% of the total workplace injuries and illnesses, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics; and

WHEREAS court and administrative law judge decisions continue to find ergonomic regulations to be without sufficient medical evidence to substantiate Occupational Safety and Health Administration citations; and

WHEREAS ergonomic principles make sense and businesses continue to adjust the workplace to the worker; however, ergonomic regulations make no sense; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the State/Commonwealth of (insert state) affirms the principle that ergonomic regulations should not be mandated as a standard or adopted as part of any workers compensation legislation until such regulations are proven to actually reduce or prevent RSI’s.

1996 Sourcebook of American State Legislation