



# The Hon Barry O'Farrell MP

## Premier of NSW

### Minister for Western Sydney

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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Friday 22 June 2012

### **A BETTER SCHEME FOR INJURED WORKERS**

NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell today welcomed the passing of Workcover reforms through Parliament.

Mr O'Farrell said the reforms were vital for workers, employers, and the economy.

“Workcover is more than \$4 billion in debt and without the reforms passed by Parliament today it would become financial unviable,” Mr O'Farrell said.

“The best protection for workers, employers, the community and our economy is a financially sound scheme focussed on returning injured workers to work where possible – and that is what we now have,” he said.

“There have been too many stories of workers injured 10, 15 or 20 years ago who have been left to languish, with their original condition often exacerbated by depression or other illnesses.”

Mr O'Farrell said the passage of the *Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2012* had saved employers from imminent 28 per cent increases to their worker's compensation insurance premiums.

The NSW Business Chamber had estimated the hike would have seen the loss of 12,600 jobs across the State.

“With premiums in NSW already between 20 and 60 per cent higher than in Victoria and Queensland, any increase would only have driven more businesses and more jobs interstate,” he said.

Mr O'Farrell said the reformed scheme would provide more generous benefits to the most seriously injured workers than the old scheme.

“For example, a single 32-year-old worker earning \$800 per week, who becomes totally incapacitated through a workplace injury, ended up with \$432 a week under the old scheme.

“The changes mean the same injured worker will be able to receive up to \$640 per week,” he said.

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