

EXHIBIT NO. 17
DATE 3-23-11
BILL NO. HB 334

MY NAME IS JULIE TONEY. I LIVE AT 6 SANDPIPER, TOWNSEND, MONTANA. I HAVE BEEN AN EMPLOYEE OF STAPLES IN HELENA SINCE MARCH 31, 1997. I AM THE LAST ORIGINAL EMPLOYEE OF THE HELENA STAPLES STORE.

I HAVE WORKED CONTINUOUSLY FOR STAPLES AND HAVE BACKED UP MANAGEMENT AND TAKEN ON MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES DURING MY WORK AT STAPLES.

I HAVE HAD INJURIES ON-THE-JOB TO MY BACK, BOTH SHOULDERS AND BOTH HANDS/WRISTS. I HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH CARPAL TUNNEL IN BOTH HANDS RECENTLY DUE TO REPETITIVE USE. MY BACK WAS INJURED LIFTING AND MY SHOULDERS WERE INJURED DUE TO THE REPETITIVE HEAVY LIFTING IN THE STORAGE ROOM AS WELL AS HELPING CUSTOMERS MOVE AND LIFT BOXES.

I LIKE MY JOB AND THE STAPLES PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS LIKED ME AND WANTED ME TO STAY ON. I HAVE BEEN A VERY LOYAL EMPLOYEE.

OVER TIME MY INJURIES HAVE MADE IT NECESSARY FOR ME TO CHANGE JOB DUTIES AND REDUCE MY HOURS. MY HOURS WHEN REDUCED HAVE CAUSED A FINANCIAL HARDSHIP ON MYSELF AND MY HUSBAND WHO IS A DISABLED POWER COMPANY WORKER.

WE LIVE ON A VERY TIGHT BUDGET. WE HAVE HAD DIFFICULTIES PAYING BILLS DURING MY PERIODS OF INJURY AND WAGE LOSS. MY MEDICAL CONDITIONS HAVE REQUIRED ONGOING CARE AND WILL REQUIRE ONGOING CARE. I REQUIRE PAIN MEDICINES AND PAIN MANAGEMENT PRESCRIBED BY DR. WEINERT, MY TREATING DOCTOR. IF THESE BENEFITS WERE CUT OFF I WOULD BE UNABLE TO DO ANY KIND OF WORK OR ACTIVITIES. MY PAIN WOULD RISE TO LEVELS PROBABLY REQUIRING ME TO ~~BE HOSPITALIZED~~. *RECEIVE EMERGENCY CARE. J*

MY MEDICAL TREATMENTS DON'T REQUIRE SURGERY. UNDER THE NEW LAW CHANGE I WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE MY MEDICINES OR TREATMENT FOR MY PAIN. I WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO CONTINUE TO WORK AT ALL AND WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO RETURN TO THE LIMITED WORK THAT I HAD BEEN ABLE TO DO OVER THE LAST YEARS BECAUSE I WOULD NOT HAVE ANY WAY TO PAY FOR MEDICAL CARE. MY MEDICINES AND VISITS TO MY PAIN MANAGEMENT DOCTOR ARE CONSTANT. THEY ARE REQUIRED TO TREAT MY BACK AND SHOULDER PROBLEMS.

ALSO, IF I COULD NOT PICK MY OWN DOCTOR THE INSURANCE DOCTOR WOULD CUT ME OFF. MY TREATING DOCTOR HAS BEEN WRITING LETTERS AND HAS SUPPORTED MY NEED FOR ONGOING MEDICAL CARE. IF I WERE REQUIRED TO GO TO AN INSURANCE COMPANY DOCTOR I WOULD HAVE TO FIGHT TO KEEP MY MEDICAL CARE AND TREATMENT. I EXPERIENCED THIS OVER THE MONTHS OF MY CLAIM.

MY HUSBAND AND I HAVE A VERY TIGHT BUDGET. WE HAVE BARELY BEEN ABLE TO MAKE OUR HOME PAYMENTS AND BASIC BILL PAYMENTS WITH MY INCOME. WHEN MY INCOME WAS REDUCED BECAUSE OF MY WORK COMP INJURIES WE COULDN'T PAY BILLS. IT HAS BECOME HARDER AND HARDER TO DO SO. I DID RECEIVE SOME PARTIAL SETTLEMENT PAYMENTS. WITHOUT THOSE SETTLEMENT PAYMENTS WE WOULD HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO FILE FOR BANKRUPTCY. IF THE LAW WERE CHANGED WHERE I RECEIVED NO PARTIAL PAYMENTS WHEN I SETTLED MY SHOULDER INJURIES OR BACK INJURY WE DEFINITELY WOULD HAVE BEEN IN A VERY DIFFICULT FINANCIAL PLACE.

THE LAW NOW GIVES ME THE POSSIBILITY FOR IMPAIRMENT PAYMENT AND SETTLEMENT. WITH MY LOW IMPAIRMENT RATINGS I WOULD NOT HAVE HAD ANY ABILITY UNDER THESE NEW CHANGES TO RECEIVE THE SMALL SETTLEMENTS TO PAY BACK CREDITORS AND PAY ON MY BILLS. WE STILL DID NOT CATCH UP BUT AT LEAST WE DIDN'T GO TO A DEEPER FINANCIAL HOLE.

THE STRESS OF MY PAIN FROM MY INJURIES HAS CAUSED ME TO HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF ANXIETY AND IS VERY UPSETTING. I HAVE BEEN DOING MY BEST TO KEEP WORKING AND NOW WORK ABOUT 10 HOURS TO 15 HOURS PER WEEK, WHICH IS ALL I CAN WORK GIVEN MY INJURIES. I LOVE TO WORK AND AM VERY SORRY THAT I HAVE HAD TO BE ON WORK COMP.

BUT THE WORK COMP MEDICAL IS THE ONLY WAY I COULD PAY MEDICAL CARE TO RELIEVE MY PAIN. AND, THE SMALL WORK COMP PARTIAL DISABILITY SETTLEMENTS DID ALLOW ME TO WORK FOR MORE YEARS THAN I CERTAINLY WOULD HAVE WORKED IF I WAS TOTALLY SHUT OUT. MY INCOME HAS BEEN CUT MORE THAN HALF DUE TO MY REDUCED HOURS AND MY WAGES HAVE BEEN REDUCED AS WELL. THIS IS EXACTLY WHY THE LAW NEEDS TO STAY THE SAME AND GIVE SOME HELP TO INJURED PEOPLE LIKE ME TO MAKE UP FOR THE MANY FINANCIAL LOSSES THAT INJURY CAUSES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND PLEASE DO NOT PASS THIS BILL WHICH WOULD LET THE INSURANCE COMPANY PICK MY DOCTOR AND CUT OFF MEDICAL CARE WAY TOO SOON. YOU HAVE A DIFFICULT JOB BUT PLEASE DON'T TAKE THIS OUT ON INJURED WORKERS LIKE MYSELF.

3-22-2011
Date

Julie Toney
Julie Toney
6 Sandpiper
P.O. Box 347
Townsend, MT 59644
Telephone: (406) 266-3502

Julie L Toney
3-23-2011

1 of 4

I have already provided a written statement to my attorney, I don't do well speaking out in front of a crowd

But

After going through my own issues with work comp I feel very strongly AGAINST these changes your voting on to change the workers compensation program

These changes are going to put more pressure on the injured worker and their families.

I feel you need to take a look at the program itself, and the people who work in and for the program

I myself have seen a lot of waste in time and money.

I have had 3 impairment ratings done on my shoulders, same injuries just different doctors

On different Dates \$\$\$

I had to go to Missoula for
AN EVALUATION.

The evaluation basically repeated
every thing that was already
documented in my file, And
why Missoula?

on one occasion after several
attempts to get through to my
claims Examiner for reimbursement
of lost wages, she finally contacted
me, Apparently work comp was
going to a paperless program, Any
unopened mail was going in the
trash, resubmit my request.

more waiting, frustration, STRESS
Why ARE Doctors so reluctant
to take on work comp patients.
my husbands Doctor left Montana,
the physician he was referred to
told my husband he didn't have
time for him. I called his claims
Examiner, she told me to find him
A doctor, Any doctor. As soon as
I mentioned work comp, they said

I would be curious to know the percentage of injured workers that had to seek legal assistance.

It appears the program takes advantage of the injured and their lack of knowledge of how the program works.

That's just not right!

My name is Julie Toney. I'm 52 yrs old
As of the 31st of this month I will have worked for the same company for 14 years. I have 3 work related injuries. I plan on continuing to work for the same company. I've been through
I can honestly state that work comp has caused me a great deal of anger and stress which probably prolonged my healing time.

surgeries
cortizone
injection
and a lot
of PT

Thank you for your time.

NO, once Again, more waiting
frustration and STRESS

LAST
STATEMENT

I wont take up Anymore of
your time, but I ASK, Hope,
that before you vote on these
changes you take A look At
the program in itself before
voting in changes that are
going to have A huge affect
on injured workers And thier
families.

We have competent, dedicated
Physicians right here in Helena.
why do you insist on choosing
the physician for our treatment

my injuries are permanent,
I will be dealing and living
with pain every day for the
rest of my life.

Im still working and want
to continue working, if I
were to lose my pain management
program I would have to cut back
on the hours I work.