FIRST REGULAR SESSION

SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR

HOUSE BILL NO. 615

98TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Reported from the Committee on Small Business, Insurance and Industry, April 23, 2015, with recommendation that the Senate Committee Substitute do pass.

ADRIANE D. CROUSE, Secretary.

1507S.02C

AN ACT

To repeal sections 287.040, 287.090, 287.140, 287.955, 287.957, and 287.975, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof seven new sections relating to workers' compensation, with an existing penalty provision.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Sections 287.040, 287.090, 287.140, 287.955, 287.957, and 287.975, RSMo, are repealed and seven new sections enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as sections 287.040, 287.090, 287.140, 287.221, 287.955, 287.957, and 287.975, to read as follows:

287.040. 1. Any person who has work done under contract on or about his premises which is an operation of the usual business which he there carries on shall be deemed an employer and shall be liable under this chapter to such contractor, his subcontractors, and their employees, when injured or killed on or about the premises of the employer while doing work which is in the usual course of his business.

2. The provisions of this section shall not apply to the owner of premises upon which improvements are being erected, demolished, altered or repaired by an independent contractor but such independent contractor shall be deemed to be the employer of the employees of his subcontractors and their subcontractors when employed on or about the premises where the principal contractor is doing work.

3. In all cases mentioned in the preceding subsections, the immediate contractor or subcontractor shall be liable as an employer of the employees of his subcontractors. All persons so liable may be made parties to the proceedings on

EXPLANATION–Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in this bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

the application of any party. The liability of the immediate employer shall be primary, and that of the others secondary in their order, and any compensation paid by those secondarily liable may be recovered from those primarily liable, with attorney's fees and expenses of the suit. Such recovery may be had on motion in the original proceedings. No such employer shall be liable as in this section provided, if the employee was insured by his immediate or any intermediate employer.

4. The provisions of this section shall not apply to**:**

(1) The relationship between a for-hire motor carrier operating within a commercial zone as defined in section 390.020 or 390.041 or operating under a certificate issued by the Missouri department of transportation or by the United States Department of Transportation, or any of its subagencies, and an owner, as defined in subdivision **[**(43)**] (42)** of section 301.010, and operator of a motor vehicle**; or**

(2) An independent contractor providing application of agricultural materials used in crop dusting, seeding, spraying, or fertilizing operations from an aircraft.

287.090. 1. This chapter shall not apply to:

(1) Employment of farm labor, domestic servants in a private home, including family chauffeurs, or occasional labor performed for and related to a private household;

(2) Qualified real estate agents and direct sellers as those terms are defined in Section 3508 of Title 26 United States Code;

(3) Employment where the person employed is an inmate confined in a state prison, penitentiary or county or municipal jail, or a patient or resident in a state mental health facility, and the labor or services of such inmate, patient, or resident are exclusively on behalf of the state, county or municipality having custody of said inmate, patient, or resident. Nothing in this subdivision is intended to exempt employment where the inmate, patient or resident was hired by a state, county or municipal government agency after direct competition with persons who are not inmates, patients or residents and the compensation for the position of employment is not contingent upon or affected by the worker's status as an inmate, patient or resident;

(4) Except as provided in section 287.243, volunteers of a tax-exempt organization which operates under the standards of Section 501(c)(3) **or Section 501(c)(19)** of the federal Internal Revenue Code, where such volunteers are not

paid wages, but provide services purely on a charitable and voluntary basis;

(5) Persons providing services as adjudicators, sports officials, or contest workers for interscholastic activities programs or similar amateur youth programs who are not otherwise employed by the sponsoring school, association of schools or nonprofit tax-exempt organization sponsoring the amateur youth programs.

2. Any employer exempted from this chapter as to the employer or as to any class of employees of the employer pursuant to the provisions of subdivision (3) of subsection 1 of section 287.030 or pursuant to subsection 1 of this section may elect coverage as to the employer or as to the class of employees of that employer pursuant to this chapter by purchasing and accepting a valid workers' compensation insurance policy or endorsement, or by written notice to the group self-insurer of which the employer is a member. The election shall take effect on the effective date of the workers' compensation insurance policy or endorsement, or by written notice to the group self-insurer of which the employer is a member, and continue while such policy or endorsement remains in effect or until further written notice to the group self-insurer of which the employer is a member. Any such exempt employer or employer with an exempt class of employees may withdraw such election by the cancellation or nonrenewal of the workers' compensation insurance policy or endorsement, or by written notice to the group self-insurer of which the employer is a member. In the event the employer is electing out of coverage as to the employer, the cancellation shall take effect on the later date of the cancellation of the policy or the filing of notice pursuant to subsection 3 of this section.

3. Any insurance company authorized to write insurance under the provisions of this chapter in this state shall file with the division a memorandum on a form prescribed by the division of any workers' compensation policy issued to any employer and of any renewal or cancellation thereof.

4. The mandatory coverage sections of this chapter shall not apply to the employment of any member of a family owning a family farm corporation as defined in section 350.010 or to the employment of any salaried officer of a family farm corporation organized pursuant to the laws of this state, but such family members and officers of such family farm corporations may be covered under a policy of workers' compensation insurance if approved by a resolution of the board of directors. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to apply to any other type of corporation other than a family farm corporation.

5. A corporation may withdraw from the provisions of this chapter, when

there are no more than two owners of the corporation who are also the only employees of the corporation, by filing with the division notice of election to be withdrawn. The election shall take effect and continue from the date of filing with the division by the corporation of the notice of withdrawal from liability under this chapter. Any corporation making such an election may withdraw its election by filing with the division a notice to withdraw the election, which shall take effect thirty days after the date of the filing, or at such later date as may be specified in the notice of withdrawal.

287.140. 1. In addition to all other compensation paid to the employee under this section, the employee shall receive and the employer shall provide such medical, surgical, chiropractic, and hospital treatment, including nursing, custodial, ambulance and medicines, as may reasonably be required after the injury or disability, to cure and relieve from the effects of the injury. If the employee desires, he shall have the right to select his own physician, surgeon, or other such requirement at his own expense. Where the requirements are furnished by a public hospital or other institution, payment therefor shall be made to the proper authorities. Regardless of whether the health care provider is selected by the employer or is selected by the employee at the employee's expense, the health care provider shall have the affirmative duty to communicate fully with the employee regarding the nature of the employee's injury and recommended treatment exclusive of any evaluation for a permanent disability rating. Failure to perform such duty to communicate shall constitute a disciplinary violation by the provider subject to the provisions of chapter 620. When an employee is required to submit to medical examinations or necessary medical treatment at a place outside of the local or metropolitan area from the employee's principal place of employment, the employer or its insurer shall advance or reimburse the employee for all necessary and reasonable expenses; except that an injured employee who resides outside the state of Missouri and who is employed by an employer located in Missouri shall have the option of selecting the location of services provided in this section either at a location within one hundred miles of the injured employee's residence, place of injury or place of hire by the employer. The choice of provider within the location selected shall continue to be made by the employer. In case of a medical examination if a dispute arises as to what expenses shall be paid by the employer, the matter shall be presented to the legal advisor, the administrative law judge or the commission, who shall set the sum to be paid and same shall be

paid by the employer prior to the medical examination. In no event, however, shall the employer or its insurer be required to pay transportation costs for a greater distance than two hundred fifty miles each way from place of treatment.

2. If it be shown to the division or the commission that the requirements are being furnished in such manner that there is reasonable ground for believing that the life, health, or recovery of the employee is endangered thereby, the division or the commission may order a change in the physician, surgeon, hospital or other requirement.

3. All fees and charges under this chapter shall be fair and reasonable, shall be subject to regulation by the division or the commission, or the board of rehabilitation in rehabilitation cases. A health care provider shall not charge a fee for treatment and care which is governed by the provisions of this chapter greater than the usual and customary fee the provider receives for the same treatment or service when the payor for such treatment or service is a private individual or a private health insurance carrier. The division or the commission, or the board of rehabilitation in rehabilitation cases, shall also have jurisdiction to hear and determine all disputes as to such charges. A health care provider is bound by the determination upon the reasonableness of health care bills.

4. The division shall, by regulation, establish methods to resolve disputes concerning the reasonableness of medical charges, services, or aids. This regulation shall govern resolution of disputes between employers and medical providers over fees charged, whether or not paid, and shall be in lieu of any other administrative procedure under this chapter. The employee shall not be a party to a dispute over medical charges, nor shall the employee's recovery in any way be jeopardized because of such dispute. Any application for payment of additional reimbursement, as such term is used in 8 CSR 50-2.030, as amended, shall be filed not later than:

(1) Two years from the date the first notice of dispute of the medical charge was received by the health care provider if such services were rendered before July 1, 2013; and

(2) One year from the date the first notice of dispute of the medical charge was received by the health care provider if such services were rendered after July 1, 2013.

Notice shall be presumed to occur no later than five business days after **[**transmission by certified United States mail**] mailing**. **For the purposes of this section, the phrase "notice of dispute" shall include, but not be**

limited to, any writing that evidences that the payment is considered to be the full payment of the fee or charge.

5. No compensation shall be payable for the death or disability of an employee, if and insofar as the death or disability may be caused, continued or aggravated by any unreasonable refusal to submit to any medical or surgical treatment or operation, the risk of which is, in the opinion of the division or the commission, inconsiderable in view of the seriousness of the injury. If the employee dies as a result of an operation made necessary by the injury, the death shall be deemed to be caused by the injury.

6. The testimony of any physician or chiropractic physician who treated the employee shall be admissible in evidence in any proceedings for compensation under this chapter, subject to all of the provisions of section 287.210.

7. Every hospital or other person furnishing the employee with medical aid shall permit its record to be copied by and shall furnish full information to the division or the commission, the employer, the employee or his dependents and any other party to any proceedings for compensation under this chapter, and certified copies of the records shall be admissible in evidence in any such proceedings.

8. The employer may be required by the division or the commission to furnish an injured employee with artificial legs, arms, hands, surgical orthopedic joints, or eyes, or braces, as needed, for life whenever the division or the commission shall find that the injured employee may be partially or wholly relieved of the effects of a permanent injury by the use thereof. The director of the division shall establish a procedure whereby a claim for compensation may be reactivated after settlement of such claim is completed. The claim shall be reactivated only after the claimant can show good cause for the reactivation of this claim and the claim shall be made only for the payment of medical procedures involving life-threatening surgical procedures or if the claimant requires the use of a new, or the modification, alteration or exchange of an existing, prosthetic device. For the purpose of this subsection, "life threatening" shall mean a situation or condition which, if not treated immediately, will likely result in the death of the injured worker.

9. Nothing in this chapter shall prevent an employee being provided treatment for his injuries by prayer or spiritual means if the employer does not object to the treatment.

10. The employer shall have the right to select the licensed treating

physician, surgeon, chiropractic physician, or other health care provider; provided, however, that such physicians, surgeons or other health care providers shall offer only those services authorized within the scope of their licenses. For the purpose of this subsection, subsection 2 of section 287.030 shall not apply.

11. Any physician or other health care provider who orders, directs or refers a patient for treatment, testing, therapy or rehabilitation at any institution or facility shall, at or prior to the time of the referral, disclose in writing if such health care provider, any of his partners or his employer has a financial interest in the institution or facility to which the patient is being referred, to the following:

(1) The patient;

(2) The employer of the patient with workers' compensation liability for the injury or disease being treated;

(3) The workers' compensation insurer of such employer; and

(4) The workers' compensation adjusting company for such insurer.

12. Violation of subsection 11 of this section is a class A misdemeanor.

13. (1) No hospital, physician or other health care provider, other than a hospital, physician or health care provider selected by the employee at his own expense pursuant to subsection 1 of this section, shall bill or attempt to collect any fee or any portion of a fee for services rendered to an employee due to a work-related injury or report to any credit reporting agency any failure of the employee to make such payment, when an injury covered by this chapter has occurred and such hospital, physician or health care provider has received actual notice given in writing by the employee, the employer or the employer's insurer. Actual notice shall be deemed received by the hospital, physician or health care provider five days after mailing **[**by certified mail**]** by the employer or insurer to the hospital, physician or health care provider.

(2) The notice shall include:

(a) The name of the employer;

(b) The name of the insurer, if known;

(c) The name of the employee receiving the services;

(d) The general nature of the injury, if known; and

(e) Where a claim has been filed, the claim number, if known.

(3) When an injury is found to be noncompensable under this chapter, the hospital, physician or other health care provider shall be entitled to pursue the employee for any unpaid portion of the fee or other charges for authorized

services provided to the employee. Any applicable statute of limitations for an action for such fees or other charges shall be tolled from the time notice is given to the division by a hospital, physician or other health care provider pursuant to subdivision (6) of this subsection, until a determination of noncompensability in regard to the injury which is the basis of such services is made, or in the event there is an appeal to the labor and industrial relations commission, until a decision is rendered by that commission.

(4) If a hospital, physician or other health care provider or a debt collector on behalf of such hospital, physician or other health care provider pursues any action to collect from an employee after such notice is properly given, the employee shall have a cause of action against the hospital, physician or other health care provider for actual damages sustained plus up to one thousand dollars in additional damages, costs and reasonable attorney's fees.

(5) If an employer or insurer fails to make payment for authorized services provided to the employee by a hospital, physician or other health care provider pursuant to this chapter, the hospital, physician or other health care provider may proceed pursuant to subsection 4 of this section with a dispute against the employer or insurer for any fees or other charges for services provided.

(6) A hospital, physician or other health care provider whose services have been authorized in advance by the employer or insurer may give notice to the division of any claim for fees or other charges for services provided for a work-related injury that is covered by this chapter, with copies of the notice to the employee, employer and the employer's insurer. Where such notice has been filed, the administrative law judge may order direct payment from the proceeds of any settlement or award to the hospital, physician or other health care provider for such fees as are determined by the division. The notice shall be on a form prescribed by the division.

14. The employer may allow or require an employee to use any of the employee's accumulated paid leave, personal leave, or medical or sick leave to attend to medical treatment, physical rehabilitation, or medical evaluations during work time. The intent of this subsection is to specifically supercede and abrogate any case law that contradicts the express language of this section.

287.221. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection 15 of section 287.220 to the contrary, the division shall be authorized to pay second injury fund liabilities for physical rehabilitation payments

under subsection 3 of section 287.141, medical expenses under subsection 7 of section 287.220 incurred after a temporary or final award of future medical benefits, and wage loss benefits under subsection 11 of section 287.220.

287.955. 1. Every workers' compensation insurer shall adhere to a uniform classification system and uniform experience rating plan filed with the director by the advisory organization designated by the director and subject to his disapproval.

2. An insurer may develop subclassifications of the uniform classification system upon which a rate may be made, except that such subclassifications shall be filed with the director thirty days prior to their use. The director shall disapprove subclassifications if the insurer fails to demonstrate that the data thereby produced can be reported consistent with the uniform statistical plan and classification system.

3. The director shall designate an advisory organization to assist him in gathering, compiling and reporting relevant statistical information. Every workers' compensation insurer shall record and report its workers' compensation experience to the designated advisory organization as set forth in the uniform statistical plan approved by the director.

4. The designated advisory organization shall develop and file manual rules, subject to the approval of the director, reasonably related to the recording and reporting of data pursuant to the uniform statistical plan, uniform experience rating plan, and the uniform classification system.

5. Every workers' compensation insurer shall adhere to the approved manual rules and experience rating plan in writing and reporting its business. No insurer shall agree with any other insurer or with the advisory organization to adhere to manual rules which are not reasonably related to the recording and reporting of data pursuant to the uniform classification system of the uniform statistical plan.

6. **[**(1) A workers' compensation insurer may develop an individual risk premium modification rating plan which prospectively modifies premium based upon individual risk characteristics which are predictive of future loss. Such rating plan shall be filed thirty days prior to use and may be subject to disapproval by the director.

(2) The rating plan shall establish objective standards for measuring variations in individual risks for hazards or expense or both. The rating plan

shall be actuarially justified and shall not result in premiums which are excessive, inadequate, or unfairly discriminatory. The rating plan shall not utilize factors which are duplicative of factors otherwise utilized in the development of rates or premiums, including the uniform classification system and the uniform experience rating plan. The premium modification factors utilized under the rating plan shall be applied on a statewide basis, with no premium modifications based solely upon the geographic location of the employer.

(3) Within thirty days of a request, the insurer shall clearly disclose to the employer the individual risk characteristics which result in premium modifications. However, this disclosure shall not in any way require the release to the insured employer of any trade secret or proprietary information or data used to derive the premium modification and that meets the definitions of, and is protected by, the provisions of chapter 417.

(4) (a)**]** Premium modifications **[**under this subsection**]** may be determined by an underwriter assessing the individual risk characteristics and applying premium credits and debits as specified under a schedule rating plan. Alternatively, an insurer may utilize software or a computer risk modeling system designed to identify and assess individual risk characteristics and which systematically and uniformly applies premium modifications to similarly situated employers.

[(b) Premium modifications resulting from a schedule rating plan, with an underwriter determining individual risk characteristics, shall be limited to plus or minus twenty-five percent. An additional ten percent credit may be given for a reduction in the insurer's expenses.

(c) Premium modifications resulting from a risk modeling system shall be limited to plus or minus fifty percent. Premium modifications resulting from a risk modeling system shall be reported separately under the uniform statistical plan from premium modifications resulting from a schedule rating plan.

(d) Premium credits or reductions shall not be removed or reduced unless there is a change in the insurer, the insurer amends or withdraws the rating plan, or unless there is a corresponding change in the insured employer's operations or risk characteristics underlying the credit or reduction.**]**

287.957. The experience rating plan shall contain reasonable eligibility standards, provide adequate incentives for loss prevention, and shall provide for sufficient premium differentials so as to encourage safety. The uniform experience rating plan shall be the exclusive means of providing prospective

premium adjustment based upon measurement of the loss-producing characteristics of an individual insured. An insurer may submit a rating plan or plans providing for retrospective premium adjustments based upon an insured's past experience. Such system shall provide for retrospective adjustment of an experience modification and premiums paid pursuant to such experience modification where a prior reserved claim produced an experience modification that varied by greater than fifty percent from the experience modification that would have been established based on the settlement amount of that claim. The rating plan shall prohibit an adjustment to the experience modification of an employer if the total medical cost does not exceed **[**one thousand dollars**] twenty percent of the current split point of primary and excess losses under the uniform experience rating plan,** and the employer pays all of the total medical costs and there is no lost time from the employment, other than the first three days or less of disability under subsection 1 of section 287.160, and no claim is filed. An employer opting to utilize this provision maintains an obligation to report the injury under subsection 1 of section 287.380.

287.975. 1. The advisory organization shall file with the director every pure premium rate, every manual of rating rules, every rating schedule and every change or amendment, or modification of any of the foregoing, proposed for use in this state no more than thirty days after it is distributed to members, subscribers or others.

2. The advisory organization which makes a uniform classification system for use in setting rates in this state shall collect data for two years after January 1, 1994, on the payroll differential between employers within the construction group of code classifications, including, but not limited to, payroll costs of the employer and number of hours worked by all employees of the employer engaged in construction work. Such data shall be transferred to the department of insurance, financial institutions and professional registration in a form prescribed by the director of the department of insurance, financial institutions and professional registration, and the department shall compile the data and develop a formula to equalize premium rates for employers within the construction group of code classifications based on such payroll differential within three years after the data is submitted by the advisory organization.

3. The formula to equalize premium rates for employers within the construction group of code classifications established under subsection 2 of this section shall be the formula in effect on January 1, 1999. This subsection shall

become effective on January 1, 2014.

4. For the purposes of calculating the premium credit under the Missouri contracting classification premium adjustment program, an employer within the construction group of code classifications may submit to the advisory organization the required payroll record information for the first, second, third, or fourth calendar quarter of the year prior to the workers' compensation policy beginning or renewal date, provided that the employer clearly indicates for which quarter the payroll information is being submitted.

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