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Workers' compensation reforms are reducing costs

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A recent guest essay mentioned the cost of workers' compensation insurance and business growth in New York. There is much good news here

The state is working to slash those costs and ensure workers have the protections they deserve, while cracking down on businesses that flout the law and cut into the profits of legitimate employers

There is a misperception that New York's workers' compensation premium costs put us at the top of the chart. In fact, New York ranks 19th among the 50 states. We fell from 10th most expensive a few years ago

Since the 2007 reforms, the rates used to calculate premiums were reduced by nearly 25 percent. That happened because the state of New York brought business and labor together, to come to an agreement that reduced costs while simultaneously increasing the benefits for injured workers for the first time in 15 years

Law-abiding businesspeople are the foundation of a strong system, so we launched an aggressive enforcement program that has given stop-work orders to 2,700 businesses that refused to carry workers' compensation insurance, as legitimate businesses do. When workers at those uninsured businesses are injured, their claims are paid out of the fines this board has collected from uninsured employers

Finally, this board is fighting the pernicious practice of employee misclassification

Employers do no one any favors when they call their employees "independent contractors" and then neglect to carry workers' compensation, unemployment and disability insurance

By cheating their employees, they undercut other employers, increase everyone's cost of doing business, and delay the benefits injured workers deserve.