

PAUL SCHUSTER'S

Permanent Disability Horror Story

The Schwarzenegger Administration's Disability Rating Schedule severely cuts benefits to permanently disabled workers.



About Me: My name is Paul Schuster. I'm 45 years old, and live in Fort Bragg, in Mendocino County on the north coast.

My Family: I'm married, my wife and I have one daughter, 22, who lives with us.

My Job and What Happened: I worked as a janitor for the Mendocino Unified School District. Of course, it's very wet in Fort Bragg much of the year. I was working one night, making my night safety rounds. As I descended the outside stairs to the gymnasium, I slipped and fell, injuring my right ankle. I've had four surgeries on my ankle. They took out bone fragments, and installed hardware. Due to constant excruciating pain, they went back in and fused my ankle bones together.

What this has meant to my life: My life has totally changed for the worse since my work injury. I had a great job, and our family was doing well. Now, I can't walk much and can only stand for 30 minutes. I can't lift or carry anything heavy. I've lost my job. I can't drive very far, even going up and down stairs is difficult. I've been reduced to collecting cans!

How the Governor's Schedule Affects Me

How Workers' Comp was supposed to help me:

Through no fault of my own, I was injured doing my job. Workers compensation insurance is supposed to provide medical care and compensation for my lifelong disabilities from my work injury. The permanent disability award is supposed to compensate me for the loss of earnings and the lessening of the quality of my life. My injury has caused financial and personal hardship to myself and my family. The governor's schedule takes nearly every dollar from my compensation. How is that fair?

BEFORE

AFTER

\$120,562

\$4,800

(Down 96%)

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For more information, please contact Mark Hayes at 714/396-5260 or email to oneinjuredworker@aol.com