

## Permanent Disability Horror Story No. 4 - Matthew Pickert

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

**About Me:** My name is Matthew Pickert. I'm 42 years old, married, and I owned a home in Castro Valley, but since my injury I have had to leave California because I cannot afford to live in the state where I was injured at work. I now live in Nevada.

**My Family:** I have a daughter, 19, and two sons, ages 8 and 3.



**My Job and What Happened:** I worked for 12 years as an Auto Mechanic in Fremont, in the SF Bay Area. My back wore out from years of bending over into engines and under hoods and dashboards. I had to have surgery to fuse my back in two places. I have not been able to return to work, nor do I ever see myself being able to return to being an auto mechanic. I have pain in my back and legs, and I can't either sit or stand for very long.

**What this has meant to my life:** Before my work injury, I used to fish, and ride motorcycles and dirt bikes. Now, I can't even get on the floor to play with my 3-year-old son, and my 8-year-old is angry that his dad can't even toss the ball with him in the yard. We owned a home, a boat, 2 motorcycles and a dirt bike before my injury. We had to sell our home to pay our bills, and I can't ride in the boat or on the motorcycles or dirt bikes, so those had to go as well.

### How the Governor's Schedule Affects Me

**How Workers' Comp was supposed to help me:**

Workers compensation is my only way to recover what I've lost due to my work injury. The award is supposed to make up for 2/3 of my lost earnings. It is also supposed to compensate me for the fact that I am no longer able to do the things I most enjoyed in life: playing with my kids, getting out on the water or in the dirt to enjoy the machines I've spent my adult life working on and enjoying. The Schwarzenegger Administration's compensation won't even cover the bills we've accumulated since my injury!

<b>BEFORE</b>	<b>AFTER</b>
\$102,235	\$32,130 (Total, for life!)

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