



**Women's Caucus of  
California Applicants' Attorneys Association**  
*Affiliated with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters*  
**& Co-Hosted With the  
California Legislative Women's Caucus**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Wednesday, February 12, 2014**

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**CAAA Women's Caucus & Women's Legislative Caucus Spotlight  
California Working Women's Injuries:**

*Call for More Research, Attention to Safety Gear, Eliminate Bias from AMA  
Guides & Other Standards*

*Women Injured More Frequently as they Age, while Men are Injured Less Often*

SACRAMENTO, CA - The California Applicants' Attorneys Association's (CAAA) Women's Caucus today hosted a "Working Women's Injuries Symposium: Causes, Consequences and Prevention," co-hosted by the California Legislative Women's Caucus. Over 100 legislators, regulators, labor leaders, workplace safety advocates, and injured workers' attorneys examined the causes of working women's on-the-job injuries, and built upon recent research to recommend policies and practices to reduce, and better address, women's workplace injuries. "We are excited to join together to examine California working women's on-the-job injuries, and how they might be better prevented and addressed," said Legislative Women's Caucus Chair Assemblymember Bonnie Lowenthal. "The percentage of women in the workforce has steadily increased and is currently at 50%. While we have achieved parity in numbers, we still have a long way to go in reaching parity in many other aspects. I hope we can build upon recent research to generate policies and ideas that can reduce, and better respond to, women's workplace injuries."

"Four out of ten households have a female parent as the sole or primary provider. We must identify ways to improve medical care, disability support, and permanent disability compensation for women injured at work. We are recommending improvements in industry practices, regulations and public policy changes," said CAAA Women's Caucus Co-Chair Christel Schoenfelder. "As a single mother myself, I understand the vital role of female breadwinners. Unfortunately, in my practice, I see the devastating effects of women's work injuries on families. There needs to be a stronger focus on women's workplace safety and injury prevention."

"Women account for 40% of all work injuries, and women ages 25-64 who perform the same jobs as men with the same number of hours have a 20% to 40% higher rate of injury. Experts have not adequately addressed many questions about women's workplace injuries. We focused today on ways to increase working

women's on-the-job safety, and identified practices and public policies to protect women workers," said Legislative Women's Caucus Vice-Chair Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson. "Some of the ideas identified today will result in legislation, regulations, industry safety practices and programs, and education programs."

"As advocates for women injured at work, we see the impacts on working women and their families every day. Today, we raised questions and joined with others seeking solutions about how women's injuries can be reduced, and how injured women can be better served as they seek medical treatment and replacement for their lost income. We are calling for more research into why women's injury risk is similar to men between the ages of 18-24, but the injury risk is 50% higher for women ages 55-64. We need to better understand why older women are being hurt, and how we can address that problem as increasing numbers of women continue to work later in life," said CAAA Women's Caucus Co-Chair Jamie Berenson.

The following presented at the Symposium: Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson; Assembly Member Lorena Gonzalez; Assembly Member Shirley Weber; Assembly Member Cristina Garcia; Christine Baker, Director, Department of Industrial Relations; Commissioner Ronnie Caplane, Chair, Workers' Compensation Appeals Board (WCAB); Meg Vasey, Executive Director, Tradeswomen, Inc.; Melissa Brown, Esq., Injured workers Yaa Asantewa, Millie Melum Sorrentino, and Jana Roundtree; Maureen Miner, M.D., President, California Society for Industrial Medicine (CSIMS); Deputy Labor Commissioner Gloria Ramirez; UFW Legislative Advocate Esperanza Ross; and, Dorothy Wigmore, Occupational Health Specialist, Work Safe.

Here are some items the Symposium addressed:

- **Underreporting of Work Injuries by Immigrant Workers.** Immigrant women workers fear retaliation and frequently don't report their injuries. Immigrant women need increased protection from retaliation for reporting their work injuries.
- **Women are concentrated in lower-paying jobs, some of which are injury-prone.** More attention is needed as to how these injuries can be prevented.
- **More women are working in traditionally male-dominated jobs such as the construction and trucking industries.** Women in these industries are concerned about lack of proper training, inadequate tools and protective equipment such as utilization of harnesses designed for men's bodies, and unsatisfactory restroom facilities. How can these industries better address women workers' needs?
- **How can Cumulative Trauma (CT) injuries be better prevented and addressed?** Many women are concentrated in jobs that commonly involve long hours of repetitive motions. For example, a grocery store checker lifts 11,000 pounds of groceries every day. What studies can be done to examine the toll these repetitive activities take on women's bodies?

*For more information, visit: [www.caaa.org](http://www.caaa.org)*