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Lou Savage to lead Oregon Workers' Compensation Division

(Salem) – Lou Savage is the new administrator for the Workers' Compensation Division, Department of Consumer and Business Services Director Patrick Allen announced today.

Savage replaces long-time administrator John Shilts, who retired in December 2015.

The division oversees the workers' compensation system, to ensure injured workers receive the benefits they need to recover while keeping costs low for employers.

Savage recently returned to Oregon after spending two and a half years providing consulting and training on law reform issues to attorneys in North Africa and the Middle East. A member of the Oregon State Bar, he has spent his career working on consumer and business issues in the nonprofit, private, and public sectors. He served as Oregon insurance commissioner from 2012 to 2013 and directed DCBS' legislative activity as senior policy advisor from 2003 to 2012. Before joining the state, Savage served as director of Multnomah County Legal Aid and state director for Oregon Congressman Ron Wyden's office. He also spent 10 years in private law practice.

"We are thrilled to have Lou back at DCBS in this important role," Allen said. "His depth of experience in worker and business issues and strong ability to bring people together and build consensus will help our workers' compensation system continue its history of success and innovation."

Oregon employers pay, on average, the eighth lowest workers' compensation premium rates in the nation. Rates have stayed low while the average benefits paid to or on behalf of workers have increased.

Savage has a law degree from Lewis & Clark College and a bachelor's degree from the University of Oregon.

"I am looking forward to working closely with workers, businesses, and other stakeholders to build on Oregon's workers' compensation success story and address the emerging needs of Oregon's changing workplaces," Savage said.

Savage's appointment is effective immediately. He has been serving as acting administrator since January.

The Department of Consumer and Business Services is Oregon's largest business regulatory and consumer protection agency. For more information, visit dcbs.oregon.gov.

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