



FACT SHEET

House Committee on Education and Labor
Chairman Robert C. "Bobby" Scott

Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act of 2022 (H.R. 6087)

Expanding access to workers' compensation for federal employees injured on the job

Injured federal employees rely on the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) Program to cover the costs of their care.

The *Federal Employees' Compensation Act* (FECA) provides wage-loss compensation, medical treatment, return-to-work assistance, and vocational rehabilitation to civilian federal employees hurt on the job. Under the program, medical costs are fully covered, and beneficiaries may, in general, select their own primary care provider, who is reimbursed for services.

Unfortunately, far too many workers cannot access the compensation they need due to the limited choice of medical providers under the FECA Program.

A growing number of health care consumers turn to Nurse Practitioners (NPs) and Physician Assistants (PAs) as their primary care providers. However, the FECA Program limits the ability of workers to choose an NP or PA as a medical provider because—under current law—only a physician may make the diagnosis, certify the injury and extent of the disability, and prescribe the patient's treatment and care. This requirement has a disparate impact on workers in rural areas, who are more likely to be affected by the [physician shortage](#).

Many federal programs already allow beneficiaries to rely on NPs and PAs. Medicare has allowed NPs to bill directly since 1997. The Indian Health Service has recognized the scope of practice of NPs and PAs since at least 2005. The Veterans Affairs system has allowed PAs and NPs to serve as primary care providers since 2016. In 2017, the Social Security Administration allowed NPs and PAs to submit medical evidence to document a disability in a Social Security Disability Insurance claim.

The bipartisan Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act of 2022 expands federal employees' access to workers' compensation by restoring their choice of medical provider.

The *Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act of 2022* amends FECA to allow NPs and PAs to receive compensation for medical services provided to federal workers injured on the job if that care is allowed within the scope of their practice under state law.