# COID AMENDMENT BILL Clause 43(4)

# CompSol's presentation to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Employment and Labour

In opposition to the proposed amendment

# Executive Summary — Clause 43(4)

 Introduction Fritz Lüttich Welcome domestic workers inclusion Part 1 – Overview. Fritz Lüttich Cessionary / Factoring House Why opposing Practical implications of cession Part 2 – Ceding Craig Tudhope What it does and does not do - Accounting / Technical Part 3 - Legal Mirieke Vermaak

Legal implications of Clause 43(4)

# CompSol overview

#### **NUMBERS:**

- National footprint of 1,863 Medical practices encompassing all 66 medical disciplines, representing more than 5,000 medical professionals.
- MSP's delivered 3,415,205 treatments to 787,319 injured workers over the past 5 years.
- Assisted 179,010 employers with their IOD's in past 5 years.

#### **VOLUMES:**

- Factored / pre-funded > R4 500 000 000 invoices over past 5 years
- We process in excess of 60% of all medical accounts submitted to the Fund

#### **STAFF:**

 Employ 438 staff – most stationed in the Eastern Cape creating much needed employment

#### **DEBTORS** (Unpaid accounts):

Collectively our MSP's are

owed more than

R556 000 000

in switched but unpaid accounts.

In addition > R180,000,000 services were already rendered in good faith, not yet submitted as claims could not be registered due to CompEasy system problems.

# **DEBTORS** (Unpaid accounts):

Average time for the Fund to pay an invoice

347 days

#### **DEBTORS** – per Labour Office

LABOUR OFFICE	<b>DEBTORS DAYS</b>	
Gqeberha	474	
Mmabatho	448	
Johannesburg	417	
East London	392	
Tshwane	360	
Kimberley	354	
Cape Town	347	
Polokwane	304	
Durban	297	
Bloemfontein	221	
Emalahleni	221	
Group Average	347	

#### **DEBTORS** Days in perspective

Medical Aid	CompSol	Compensation Fund
25 – 40 days	14 days	221 – 474 days

# Is it fair that YOUR DOCTOR waits more than a year to be paid?

# **Overview Summary**

#### **CESSIONARIES:**

- Are the Gate Keepers & Aggregators
- Ensure MSPs, Employers and Injured Workers realise their rights in terms of the COID Act
- Provide administrative support to Employers, Employees and MSP's
- Provide Working Capital to MSPs.
- Eliminate 99.9% of potential fraud

# Why do we oppose Clause 43(4)?

#### PROBLEM STATEMENT:

 Despite repeated outreach there has been limited response by and engagement with Compensation Fund Commissioner Mr. Vuyo Mafata regarding serious shortcomings on the Fund's side

#### Senior Management officials are unable to:

- Ensure fixing of CompEasy problems
- Train staff to prevent incorrect rejections of valid invoices
- Individual MSPs cannot afford to take LEGAL ACTION

# Why do we oppose Clause 43(4)?

#### Stakeholders seek

#### JUST ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

Clause 43(4) seeks to ban the collective ability of 3<sup>rd</sup> Party cessionaries to hold the Fund accountable for Just Administrative Action.

# What are our options?

All operational engagements with the Fund are exhausted,

We are left with no choice but to engage in legal action

# What has the High Court ruled?

- No less than 18 different Judges of the High Court rejected all of the Funds repetitive & frivolous defenses – yet they persist with Fruitless & Wasteful expenditure.
- Judge Constantinides made the following judgment:

"This [Funds legal action] is a textbook example of the abuse of the Court process."

4 May 2020

• In 9 recent court cases the Fund presented 113 rejected invoice examples, under oath, directly out of CE, as proof why those invoices will not be paid by the Fund

On investigation all 113 invoices were invalidly rejected.

#### **Our Proof**

#### **INVALID REJECTIONS: Total R222 million**

INVALID REJECTIONS					
PROBLEM TYPE	CF REJECTION CATEGORY	TOTAL			
COMPEASY(CE) SOFTWARE	Invalid Billing	48			
	Invalid Claim Number or Liability Not Accepted	26			
	Exempted Employer	9			
	Invalid BP Number	2			
CE SOFTWARE PROBLEM TOTAL					
CF STAFF	No or Invalid Pre-Authorisation and / or lack of Medical Report	20			
	Duplicate Claim	4			
	No Rejection Reason	2			
	Claim Has Been Paid	1			
	CF Need Actual Invoice	1			
CF STAFF PROBLEM TOTAL		28			
TOTAL INVALID REJECTIONS		113			

"Even the best Employees cannot work with a broken system"

Fraud is eliminated as we ensure legal compliance before an invoice is submitted to the Fund via our state-of-the-art software with build in validations.

- Fund is alerted to possible fraudulent transactions
- Most (if not all) reported cases involved the Fund's own staff and / or MSP's submitting invoices directly to the Fund.
- Invoices are switched AFTER the Fund has accepted liability for the incident

No legal action for fraud has ever been taken against any 3rd Party cessionary

Legal action has been successful against 3rd party administrators

NOT offering a factoring / cession product.

- Inclusion of Clause 43(4) has no impact on these entities
  - Will thus not prevent fraud

#### **FACTORING = ZERO COSTS**

- MSPs carry the full cost of a commercial factoring agreement.
- No costs to Employer, Injured Worker or the Compensation Fund.
- The factoring process happens **POST patient treatment** and does not prohibit any *medico legal* action against MSP's.

#### **FACTORING BENEFITS:**

- Much needed working capital injected into medical practices ensuring their sustainability & willingness to treat Injured Workers
- allows young, newly-qualified doctors to get their practices established, buy equipment and sustainably treat IOD patients
- Injured Workers are assisted by willing and able MSPs
- Back-to-work protocols ensure minimum negative impact on the economy
- Employers have minimal downtime & are assisted in their effort to comply with the complex COID environment

#### SUMMARY

3<sup>rd</sup> Party Cessionaries are:
Gatekeepers
Aggregators
Part of the solution - not the problem
Need legal access to court

The problem is the chronic dysfunctionality of the Compensation Funds' systems and poorly trained staff

Inclusions of Clause 43(4) of the Bill will deepen the problems of the CF

#### SUMMARY

#### Workers being denied their rights

Medical service providers withdrawing from IOD medical treatment

Employers not receiving what they pay for

Compensation Fund facing collapse and damaging the economy

#### The End – PART 1

I will now hand over to Mr. Craig Tudhope CA(SA)

He will discuss:

"The technicalities of Ceding – what it does and does not do"

# **Clause 43(4)**

#### Amendment of section 73 of Act 130 of 1993

- **43.** Section 73 of the principal Act is hereby amended by the addition of the following subsections:
  - "(3) Notwithstanding the provision of subsection (2) the medical practitioner may after the claim has been finalised or the period referred to in subsection (1) has lapsed, apply for reopening of the claim and payment of further medical costs.
  - (4) Any provision of any agreement existing at the commencement of this Act or concluded thereafter in terms of which a service provider cedes or purports to cede or relinquishes or purports to relinquish any rights to medical claim in terms of this Act, shall be void.".

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# **Background and Context**

#### MEMORANDUM ON THE OBJECTS OF THE COMPENSATION FOR OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES AND DISEASES AMENDMENT BILL, 2020

#### 2. CLAUSE BY CLAUSE ANALYSIS

#### 2.11 Clause 43

Clause 43 seeks to amend section 73 of the Act to expressly provide for the reopening of the claims after the expiry of two years from the date of accident and to provide that any provision of any agreement existing at the commencement of this Act or concluded thereafter in terms of which a service provider cedes or purports to cede or relinquishes or purports to relinquish any rights to medical claim in terms of this Act, shall be void.

• Introduced in 2015 as requirement for Cabinet sign-off

CRITERIA	EXTRACT	
Quality sign off date by Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation:	2 August 2019	
Version signed off:	May 2015	
How long did it take the department to complete the SEIA template?	Two months, including consultative workshop(s) and final report writing.	



#### THE PRESIDENCY

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (SEIAS)

FINAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR COMPENSATION FOR INJURIES AND DISEASES ACT (COIDA)



#### SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE SIGN- OFF FORM

This is to confirm that:

- The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) has assessed the Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SEIAS) Report as per the following:
- \* Initiating Department : Employment and Labour
- \* Name : Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Disease Amendment Bill
- \* Type of Assessment : Final Impact Assessment
- The initiating department has been given feedback and incorporated all inputs as contained in the Final Socio-Economic Impact Assessment report.
- Permission is granted to the Department to proceed with submission of the Compensation for Injuries and Disease Amendment Bill and the SEIAS Final Impact Assessment report to Cabinet.
- 4. Verified and signed off by SEIAS Unit:

Official Stamp and Date



- 3. In conclusion, summarize what should be done to reduce the costs, maximize the benefits, and mitigate the risks associated with the legislation. Note supplementary measures (such as educational campaigns or provision of financing) as well as amendments to the draft itself, if appropriate. Add more lines if required.
  - The costs can be reduced by ensuring that well designed rehabilitation programmes are implemented and best rehabilitation infrastructure is ensured in order to achieve the objectives of the bill.
  - b. Best monitoring tools should be sourced upfront.
  - c. Cost can also be reduced by securing buy-in from social partners so that all parties will be doing their part without too much policing that cost money. This can be achieved partly through educational campaigns by government and by employers and employees' unions.
  - d. Collaboration by government departments and agencies where shared objectives exists will also minimize implementation and monitoring costs.
  - Collaboration with stakeholders will have a major impact on preventing corruption if they all support the programmes and interventions.
- Please identify areas where additional research would improve understanding of the costs, benefits and/or risks of the legislation.
  - Benchmark research will be needed and thereafter,
  - Continuous research will be needed to assess implementation and impact thereof.
- 5. For the purpose of building a SEIAS body of knowledge please complete the following:

Name of the Official: Tendani Ramulongo Designation: Director Unit: Research Policy and planning

Contact Details: 012 309 4231

Email address: tendani.ramulongo@labour.gov.za

5.3 How long did it take the department to complete this template?
Two Months, including consultative workshop and final report writing.

Version: May 2015

Group	Implementation costs	Cost of changing behaviour	Costs/benefits from achieving desired outcome	Comments
Medical service providers	Prohibition of ceding their claims to third parties	Campaigns to encourage Medical service providers to submit claims directly.  Cost of implementing technology that allows for speedy payment of claims.	Reduce fraud and corruption by third parties who buy claims from Doctors.	This will assist the Fund by creating a direct business-to-business with our stakeholders and clients by eliminating third parties

- No consultation of:
  - "Third parties" neither cessionaries nor administrators
  - Private healthcare sector
  - Registered Credit Providers, Co-operative Financial Institutions,
     Registered Banks, Factoring Houses or other financial institutions

# Presentation & Introduction to Parliament

Clause 43 not included in presentation to Committee on 4 November 2020

# **Committee Minutes / Reports**

# Report of the Portfolio Committee on Employment and Labour on an Oversight Visit to the Compensation Fund Head-Quarters, Dated 10 June 2020

Third-parties have been involved in the claims process for a long time. The involvement of the third-parties resulted from the inefficiencies of the Fund. The third-parties employed the previous employees of the Fund who knew the inefficiencies of the Fund and exploited them to the benefit of the third parties. The CF realised that uMehluko system was not what it needed, hence the introduction of Comp-Easy. The transition from uMehluko to Comp-Easy started on 1 October 2019. The uMehluko system was switched of but migration of data to the new system is ongoing. Therefore, there is currently one system that is operational. The DG explained that the current complaints from the third-parties are as a result of the leaks in the system being closed.

The DG explained that the purpose of introducing the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases (COID) Amendment Bill is to eliminate having to deal with third-parties in future.

[Emphasis added]

## What is and What isn't Cession?

# **Clause 43(4)**

#### Amendment of section 73 of Act 130 of 1993

- **43.** Section 73 of the principal Act is hereby amended by the addition of the following subsections:
  - "(3) Notwithstanding the provision of subsection (2) the medical practitioner may after the claim has been finalised or the period referred to in subsection (1) has lapsed, apply for reopening of the claim and payment of further medical costs.
  - (4) Any provision of any agreement existing at the commencement of this Act or concluded thereafter in terms of which a service provider cedes or purports to cede or relinquishes or purports to relinquish any rights to medical claim in terms of this Act, shall be void.".

#### What does "cede" or "purports to cede" mean?

Cession is AN ACT whereby the cedent (medical service provider)

TRANSFERS RIGHTS (invoice) to the

Cessionary (Commercial Bank, registered financial services and credit provider or CompSol)

Simply the sale of a medical invoice for services

ALREADY rendered

# So what "rights" can one transfer or cede for an invoice (or "medical claim")?

- ✓ Ownership of the invoice
- ✓ To be paid by the debtor (Compensation Fund) as if you were the cedent
- ✓ To take legal action against the debtor (*locus standi*) should the debtor not pay

### BUT....

It seems like there is some confusion

- Prevent the Compensation Fund from interacting with its clients
- Cause or increase the risk of fraud
- Determine into whose bank account monies for medical services administered are to be paid
- Impact the compensation benefits received by the injured employee
- Result in additional costs to the Compensation Fund
- Violate any provisions of the Health Professions Act

**×** Prevent the Compensation Fund from interacting with its clients

BUSINESS DAY ARTICLE:
OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSAL TO BAN THE TRANSFER OF MEDICAL CLAIMS
1 FEBRUARY 2021

"However, the department of employment and labour has defended the proposal, saying it wants the Compensation Fund to work directly with clients as all other insurance companies and medical aid schemes did."

"The department's chief director of labour relations Thembinkosi Mkalipi said the Compensation Fund dealing directly with its clients as other insurance companies and medical aid schemes do is in the best interests of workers, business and the fund."

**×** Prevent the Compensation Fund from interacting with its clients

FINANCIAL MAIL ARTICLE:
NEW COMPENSATION BILL: A CURE OR AN INJURY? –
18 FEBRUARY 2021

Mafata tells the FM the fund "does not have an issue with doctors using intermediaries to submit their claims and medical bills."

**×** Prevent the Compensation Fund from interacting with its clients

FINANCIAL MAIL ARTICLE: NEW COMPENSATION BILL: A CURE OR AN INJURY? – 18 FEBRUARY 2021

Mafata says the amendment would not prohibit the use of third parties to submit claims on behalf of clients and beneficiaries. "Our processes do allow for this, provided the third party or agent can prove that they have been authorised to act on clients' behalf."

Third-party administrators and practice managers are the accepted norm in the medical industry

- × Cause or increase the risk of fraud
- Determine into whose bank account monies for medical services administered should be paid

FINANCIAL MAIL ARTICLE: NEW COMPENSATION BILL: A CURE OR AN INJURY? – 18 FEBRUARY 2021

Mafata tells the FM the fund "...[The reason] we won't pay into the account of third parties is to eliminate fraud. We want to pay the person who is our client, because we use verification systems and sometimes these claims fail to satisfy our systems."

× Cause or increase the risk of fraud

FINANCIAL MAIL ARTICLE: NEW COMPENSATION BILL: A CURE OR AN INJURY? – 18 FEBRUARY 2021

Mafata says the amendment would not prohibit the use of third parties to submit claims on behalf of clients and beneficiaries. "Our processes do allow for this, provided the third party or agent can prove that they have been authorised to act on clients' behalf."

BankServ Africa verifications would not fail for authorised third parties

- Impact the compensation benefits received by the injured employee
  - Clause 43(4) regulates rights to a "medical claim" or medical invoice NOT employee compensation
  - Section 33 of the COID Act <u>ALREADY</u> prohibits employee compensation cessions
    - 33. Cession or relinquishment of benefits void

Any provision of an agreement existing at the commencement of this Act or concluded thereafter in terms of which an employee cedes or purports to cede or relinquishes or purports to relinquish any right to benefits in terms of this Act, shall be void.

✓ Mr Mafata noted this in the Portfolio Committee meeting on 19 February 2021

- Impact the compensation benefits received by the injured employee
  - Clause 43(4) regulates rights to a "medical claim" or medical invoice

FINANCIAL MAIL ARTICLE: NEW COMPENSATION BILL: A CURE OR AN INJURY? – 18 FEBRUARY 2021

But what it would do is "ban the ceding of the right to benefits. The person who is injured or the one who treated that person is the person the fund will pay. Not a third party." He stresses that should an employer or a medical practitioner elect to have a third party to submit claims on their behalf, "such claims are and will continue to be accepted [but] the fund will only pay into bank accounts of the client of the fund and not of a third party".

- × Result in additional costs to the Compensation Fund
  - ✓ Mr Mafata confirmed that costs are paid by the Medical Service Providers themselves Portfolio Committee meeting on 19 February 2021

#### BUSINESS DAY ARTICLE:

OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSAL TO BAN THE TRANSFER OF MEDICAL CLAIMS – 1 FEBRUARY 2021

There is no need to incur **additional costs** by involving third-parties in the claims process, Mkalipi said, adding that the fund not [not] operating optimally is a separate issue.

REMEMBER:

Cession is an "Act" (by a medical service provider)

× Violate any provisions of the Health Professions Act

FINANCIAL MAIL ARTICLE: NEW COMPENSATION BILL: A CURE OR AN INJURY? – 18 FEBRUARY 2021

Also, in terms of the Health Professions Act, medical practitioners are prohibited from sharing their fees with other parties, "so we are trying to improve issues of compliance as well", says Mafata.

#### **×** Violate any provisions of the Health Professions Act

The Executive Committee of the Medical and Dental Professions Board of the Health Professions Council of South Africa resolved that –

RESOLVED that the resolution of December 2002 by the Executive Committee be confirmed, namely that Dr R Williams be informed that it would be permissible for book debts to be ceded to financial institutions other than banks, subject thereto that such cession of book debts would fully comply with the ethical requirements of the Board as set out in the resolution marked MDB, March 2000, Item 54.

MDB, March 2003, Item 54

[Emphasis added]

# Internal Controls vs Legislation Amendments

# Amending Legislation to manage Internal Controls

- ✓ Clause 43(4) does not prohibit "third parties"
  - ✓ Practice managers / third parties may continue to work with the Fund
  - Sufficient and appropriate authorisation should be obtained

# Amending Legislation to manage Internal Controls

- ✓ Risks identified by the Fund (e.g. Fraud, corruption) should be addressed:
  - ✓ A system of well established preventative, corrective and detective controls.
  - ✓ A strong control environment with general and application (e.g. SAP) controls
    - \* Annual Report 2020 Disclaimer of Opinion
    - × 2021 / 2022 Annual Performance Plan
  - NOT legislative amendments

# What are the legal impacts of Clause 43(4)?

- Preventing ownership / transfer / disposal of invoice assets unconstitutional
- Preventing legal action from being instituted against the Compensation Fund by third party aggregators

A single party with specialist administrative experience

VS

Thousands of doctors diverting time away from seeing patients





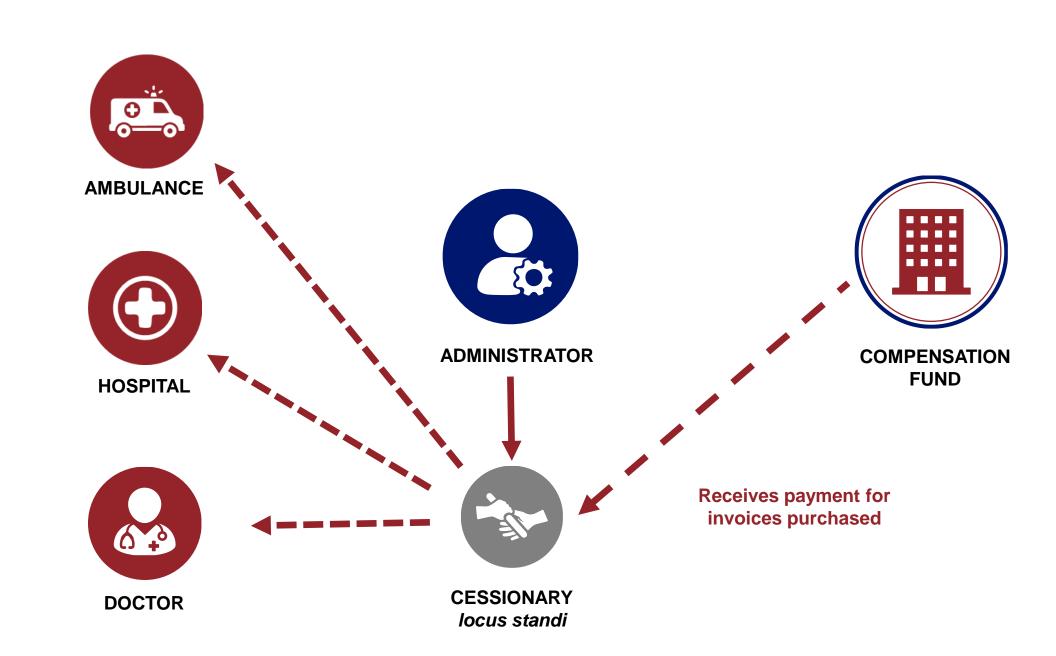












# Constitutionality and Legality

# **Constitutionality & Legality**

Clause 43(4) violates at least the following Constitutional rights:

- × Right to property (Section 25)
- Freedom of trade, occupation, and profession (Section 22)
- **x** Right of access to courts (Section 34)

#### **Section 25(1):**

 "No one may be deprived of property except in terms of law of general application, and no law may permit arbitrary deprivation of property."

- Medical invoices (accounts) are the life blood of any practice
- Medical invoices are the surety required by financial institutions to secure working capital / cash flow (similar to using your house as collateral to obtain a bond)
- Clause 43(4) will prevent medical service providers to use their invoices as collateral for financing of working capital which infringes on their rights to property.

- Clause 43(4) intents to abolish cession with retroactive effect
- This would deprive them of finances already secured

- No clear sufficient reason was brought for clause 43(4) that can rationalize why medical service providers may be deprived of their property or the ability to transact with it
- No public interest has credibly been proven to justify limiting medical service providers' right to property
- Case law found that an appropriate relationship must be found between :

# Rational Public Purpose vs Private Harm Caused

If not, its arbitrary deprivation and unconstitutional

"The idea is not to protect private property from all state interference but rather to safeguard it from illegitimate and unfair state interference."

Reflect-All 1025 CC v MEC for Public Transport, Roads and Works, Gauteng Provincial Government 2009 (6) SA 391 (CC) para 33

[Emphasis added]

#### **Section 22:**

 "Every citizen has the right to choose their trade, occupation or profession freely. The practice of a trade, occupation or profession may be regulated by law."

- Clause 43(4) intended to limit the medical service provider's right with what they may do with their medical accounts for services already rendered
- Purports to govern and control the economic rights of a medical service provider

Limitation only valid in terms of section 36 if: "reasonable and justifiable in an open and democratic society"

#### 36. Limitation of rights

- 1. The rights in the Bill of Rights may be limited only in terms of law of general application to the extent that the limitation is reasonable and justifiable in an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom, taking into account all relevant factors, including
  - a. the nature of the right;
  - b. the importance of the purpose of the limitation;
  - c. the nature and extent of the limitation;
  - d. the relation between the limitation and its purpose; and
  - e. less restrictive means to achieve the purpose.

#### **Justification of clause 43(4):**

- Eliminate having to deal with third-parties in future
- Third party cessions cause or increase risk and fraud
- Public and Fund's interest

- Administrators and intermediaries may continue to represent doctors
- No fraud proven or prosecuted against any of the third party cessionaries
- No public interest proven in any way and limited stakeholder engagement (SEIA and lack of consultation with medical sector)

- No justification for the limitation of Section 22
- Less restrictive measures can be put into place
- No legitimate connection between the purposes identified in the Bill and the prohibition of cession of medical accounts
- Is irrational

### Right of Access to Courts

#### **Section 34:**

 "Everyone has the right to have any dispute that can be resolved by the application of law decided in a fair public hearing before a court or, where appropriate, another independent and impartial tribunal or forum."

### Right of Access to Courts

- Will prevent medical account cessionaries to access the courts
- Result in the Fund no longer being held judicially accountable –which is not in public interest
- Legal challenges are important as they create pressure on all parties in the value chain to fulfil their mandate – either contractual in the case of medical account cessionaries, or constitutional mandate and legal obligations in the case of the Fund.

# Nothing has been proven to be in public interest

No rationale for Clause 43(4)

No justification for the limitation of Constitutional rights

# **CLOSING**

# **Keeping Clause 43(4)**"Cession Prohibition"

#### RSA STAKEHOLDERS

### NO BENEFITS

(Employers, Injured workers, Unions, Employer Associations, Medical Service Providers, Professional Associations, Suppliers of Working Capital)

#### **COMPENSATION FUND**

# PREVENT AGGREGATE LEGAL ACTION

# Removing Clause 43(4) "Cession Prohibition"

#### RSA STAKEHOLDERS

- Support to employers and treatment to injured workers
- Enhance "back-to-work" program
- Willing and able medical service provider network
- Sustainability of medical practices
- Security to financial service providers

#### **COMPENSATION FUND**

- Support to employers and treatment of injured workers
- Simplified administration
- 99.9% of fraud eliminated
- Willing private medical sector
- Support "Back-to-work" program
- Positive contribution to economy
- No delay in getting domestic workers integrated
- Acting within the legal framework of the Constitution

# Honourable Members of the Employment and Labour Committee –

Please do the right thing for our country and its people remove Clause 43(4) from the Bill