

**Craig J.
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**Guest
Editorial,
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Campaign clipboard

Miss the mark on workers' comp....

I have done workers' compensation law for seventeen years and have lectured for the bar association on a variety of issues, including coverage issues. Wright Risk Management is a third party administrator who handles claims on behalf of self-insured entities, including Smithtown. They are paid for their services and the town pays all claims related costs. There has been a substantial change in the workers' compensation law that has made compensation costs less expensive for all employers in the state. Part of the savings has been due to a new cap on all awards for permanent disability and a hostile position called voluntary withdrawal. All carriers and third party administrators have been kicking claimant's off of continuing awards and quite frankly, the WC Board has become harshly anti-claimant over the last twelve years, more so in the last two or three years. Claims across the Board are less expensive.

This so-called safety initiatives are a smoke screen. Part of Wright Risk's m/o is to deny claims as soon as they are filed. They also use these "safety" meetings to intimidate workers and prevent them from filing claims. It has obviously been effective. Lighter leaf bags - I can't stop laughing. Ed Werheim and Pat Vecchio have communicated their desire that claims not be filed. Mr. Vecchio's letter is about as subtle as a sledge hammer. It's unfortunate that people are truly worried about losing their jobs.

-Craig Tortora

**Democratic candidate for Smithtown Town Board,
in response to an article in The Smithtown News June 25 edition.
Via email Friday, June 26**