

ENROLLED
HB1169ER

1 VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

2 *An Act to amend and reenact § 65.2-714 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Workers' Compensation*
3 *Commission; charges for medical services.*

4 [H 1169]
5 Approved

6 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

7 **1. That § 65.2-714 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

8 § 65.2-714. Fees of attorneys and physicians and hospital charges.

9 A. Fees of attorneys and physicians and charges of hospitals for services, whether employed by
10 employer, employee or insurance carrier under this title, shall be subject to the approval and award of
11 the Commission. In addition to the provisions of Chapter 13 (§ 65.2-1300 et seq.) of this title, the
12 Commission shall have exclusive jurisdiction over all disputes concerning such fees or charges and may
13 order the repayment of the amount of any fee which has already been paid that it determines to be
14 excessive; appeals from any Commission determinations thereon shall be taken as provided in
15 § 65.2-706. *The Commission shall also retain jurisdiction for employees to pursue payment of charges*
16 *for medical services notwithstanding that bills or parts of bills for health care services may have been*
17 *paid by a source other than an employer, workers' compensation carrier, guaranty fund or uninsured*
18 *employer's fund.* No physician shall be entitled to collect fees from an employer or insurance carrier
19 until he has made the reports required by the Commission in connection with the case.

20 B. If a contested claim is held to be compensable under this title and, after a hearing on the claim on
21 its merits or after abandonment of a defense by the employer or insurance carrier, benefits for medical
22 services are awarded and inure to the benefit of a third party insurance carrier or health care provider,
23 the Commission shall award to the employee's attorney a reasonable fee and other reasonable pro rata
24 costs as are appropriate from the sum which benefits the third party insurance carrier or health care
25 provider. Such fees shall be based on the amount paid by the employer or insurance carrier to the third
26 party insurance carrier or health care provider for medical, surgical and hospital service rendered to the
27 employee through the date on which the contested claim is heard before the Deputy Commissioner. For
28 the purpose of this subsection, a "contested claim" is an initial contested claim for benefits and claims
29 for medical, surgical and hospital services that are subsequently contested and litigated or after
30 abandonment of a defense by the employer or insurance carrier.

31 C. Payment of any obligation pursuant to this section to any third party insurance carrier or health
32 care provider shall discharge the obligation in full. The Commission shall not reduce the amount of
33 medical bills owed to the Commonwealth or its agencies without the written consent of the Office of the
34 Attorney General.

35 D. No physician, hospital, or other health care provider as defined in § 8.01-581.1 shall balance bill
36 an employee in connection with any medical treatment, services, appliances or supplies furnished to the
37 employee in connection with an injury for which an award of compensation is made pursuant to
38 § 65.2-704. For the purpose of this subsection, a health care provider "balance bills" whenever (i) an
39 employer or the employer's insurance carrier declines to pay all of the health care provider's charge or
40 fee and (ii) the health care provider seeks payment of the balance from the employee.