

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2025

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SENATE BILL 703

Short Title: Update 1987 Rates/Organs and Disfigurement. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Britt, B. Newton, and Daniel (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

March 26, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT AMENDING THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT TO INCREASE CERTAIN  
BENEFITS UNDER THE SCHEDULE OF INJURIES AND TO PROVIDE FOR  
AUTOMATIC BENEFIT ADJUSTMENTS BASED UPON INCREASES IN THE  
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** Effective July 1, 2026, G.S. 97-29 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 97-29. Rates and duration of compensation for total incapacity.**

(a) When an employee qualifies for total disability, the employer shall pay or cause to be paid, as hereinafter provided by subsections (b) through (d) of this section, to the injured employee a weekly compensation equal to sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66 2/3%) of his average weekly wages, but not more than the amount established annually to be effective January 1 as provided herein, nor less than ~~thirty dollars (\$30.00)~~ fifty dollars (\$50.00) per week. Beginning July 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the North Carolina Industrial Commission shall raise the maximum compensation herein in accordance with the percentage change in the June Consumer Price Index computed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the June Consumer Price Index for the prior year, provided that this percentage change is positive. The adjustment shall be rounded to the nearest dollar (\$1.00)."

**SECTION 2.** Effective July 1, 2026, G.S. 97-31 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 97-31. Schedule of injuries; rate and period of compensation.**

In cases included by the following schedule the compensation in each case shall be paid for disability during the healing period and in addition the disability shall be deemed to continue for the period specified, and shall be in lieu of all other compensation, including disfigurement, to wit:

...

(21) In case of serious facial or head disfigurement, the Industrial Commission shall award proper and equitable compensation not to exceed ~~twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000)~~ Fifty-six thousand dollars (\$56,000). In case of enucleation where an artificial eye cannot be fitted and used, the Industrial Commission may award compensation as for serious facial disfigurement. Beginning July 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the North Carolina Industrial Commission shall raise the maximum compensation herein in accordance with the percentage change in the June Consumer Price Index computed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the June Consumer Price Index for the prior year, provided that this percentage change is positive. The adjustment shall be rounded to the nearest dollar (\$1.00).



(22) In case of serious bodily disfigurement for which no compensation is payable under any other subdivision of this section, but excluding the disfigurement resulting from permanent loss or permanent partial loss of use of any member of the body for which compensation is fixed in the schedule contained in this section, the Industrial Commission may award proper and equitable compensation not to exceed ~~ten thousand dollars (\$10,000)~~twenty-eight thousand dollars (\$28,000). Beginning July 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the North Carolina Industrial Commission shall raise the maximum compensation herein in accordance with the percentage change in the June Consumer Price Index computed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the June Consumer Price Index for the prior year, provided that this percentage change is positive. The adjustment shall be rounded to the nearest dollar (\$1.00).

(24) In case of the loss of or permanent injury to any important external or internal organ or part of the body for which no compensation is payable under any other subdivision of this section, the Industrial Commission may award proper and equitable compensation not to exceed ~~twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000)~~fifty-six thousand dollars (\$56,000). Beginning July 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the North Carolina Industrial Commission shall raise the maximum compensation herein in accordance with the percentage change in the June Consumer Price Index computed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the June Consumer Price Index for the prior year, provided that this percentage change is positive. The adjustment shall be rounded to the nearest dollar (\$1.00)."

**SECTION 3.** Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes

law.