

CHAPTER 736

H.B. No. 999

AN ACT

relating to the locations at which hearings regarding workers' compensation claims may be conducted by the Industrial Accident Board.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:*

SECTION 1. Section 10(a), Article 8307, Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

(a) Said Board or any member thereof may hold hearings or take testimony or make investigations at any point within this state, reporting the result thereof, if the same is made by one member, to the Board. The Board shall also employ and use the assistance of a sufficient number of pre-hearing officers for the purpose of adjusting and settling claims for compensation; provided, however, that pre-hearing officers shall not be empowered to take testimony.

Notwithstanding any provision of this Act, *unless otherwise agreed by the claimant and the association*, no claimant or association shall be required to appear before the Board or Board Member at any location other than:

- (1) *the county seat of the county in which the injury occurred;*
- (2) *the municipality in which the claimant resides; or*
- (3) *a site that is located not more than 75 miles from the site at which [within a distance greater than one hundred (100) miles from the courthouse of the county of the claimant's residence or within a greater distance than one hundred (100) miles of the courthouse of the county where] the injury occurred.*

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 1987, and applies only to a hearing on a workers' compensation claim that is based on an injury that occurs on or after that date. A claim based on an injury that occurred before that date is subject to Section 10(a), Article 8307, Revised Statutes, as it existed at the time the injury occurred, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 3. The importance of this legislation and the crowded condition of the calendars in both houses create an emergency and an imperative public necessity that the constitutional rule requiring bills to be read on three several days in each house be suspended, and this rule is hereby suspended.

Passed by the House on May 6, 1987, by a non-record vote; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 999 on May 30, 1987, by a non-record vote. Passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 28, 1987, by a viva-voce vote.

Approved June 19, 1987.

Effective Sept. 1, 1987.