

Crandall Compliance Alert

OSHA Regulatory Update

This Issue

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Michaels Asks Congress to Strengthen OSHA's Ability to Protect Workers' Lives

Assistant Secretary David Michaels told the House Committee on Education and Labor that OSHA needs greater enforcement power to provide workers with the safety and health protection they deserve. Michaels testified at a July 13 hearing on the Miner Safety and Health Act (H.R. 5663). This legislation provides critical amendments to the OSH Act that would increase OSHA's civil and criminal penalties, enhance whistleblower protections and victims' rights, and give OSHA the authority to require abatement of serious hazards even if and while the employer contests citations issued for them. This legislation would also expand the rights of workers and victims' families. Michaels told the committee what he learned from his experiences talking to children, spouses and parents of workers killed on the job. "The only thing they want; the only thing they ask you to do is pass laws that contain the best possible protections, that prevent any other workers -- whether mine workers, refinery workers, construction workers, or hospital workers -- from losing their lives, from leaving their loved ones behind."

Whistleblowers.gov Offers Quick Worker Access to Whistleblower Protection Information

OSHA's new dedicated Web address for its whistleblower protection program -- www.whistleblowers.gov -- provides workers with easily accessible information about how to "blow the whistle" on unlawful practices in the workplace. The Web page provides information about worker rights and provisions under each of the whistleblower statutes and regulations OSHA enforces, program fact sheets and information on how to file a retaliation complaint with OSHA. "OSHA doesn't work unless workers feel secure in exercising their rights," said Assistant Secretary David Michaels. "This Web page is part of OSHA's promise to stand by those workers who have the courage to come forward when they know their employer is cutting corners on safety and health."