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## **OSHA URGED NOT TO IMPLEMENT ERGONOMIC REGULATIONS**

*(OSHA's Proposed Ergonomics Standard)*

The Washington Legal Foundation (WLF) will testify next Friday, April 21, at a hearing before the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regarding the agency's proposed ergonomics standard. Last month, WLF and its Economic Freedom Clinic at George Mason University urged OSHA through written comments not to implement the ergonomic regulations because they are overly broad, burdensome, and vague. Jerome K. Bowman, a partner with the Chicago law firm of Ross & Hardies, is representing WLF *pro bono* at the hearing.

Ergonomics, which OSHA defines as "the science of fitting jobs to people," remains a murky area of research. Congress has twice forbidden OSHA from crafting rules on ergonomics, and ordered the National Academy of Sciences to study and release a report on the issue. Despite the scientific uncertainty, OSHA has proposed regulations that would affect thousands of employers and millions of employees, and cost billions of dollars annually. In its written comments, WLF argued that OSHA's proposed standard, rather than eliminating ergonomics problems, would generate great costs and uncertainty for employers. WLF added that the regulations are written so that it is very difficult for employers to know whether they are in compliance with OSHA's requirements.

"With OSHA's inspectors in a position to second-guess employers, the proposed standard opens the door to uncertainty for businesses and arbitrary enforcement by bureaucrats," said WLF Counsel Jeffrey S. Burk. "WLF's testimony will punctuate its view that these regulations should not be implemented, particularly until further scientific study is completed and more specific, less costly solutions are devised. These regulations are disruptive and expensive for employers and will not solve the problems they seek to address."

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