**Struggle for Regulatory Power between States and the US Federal Government:**

**The Case of Workers’ Compensation Insurance 1930-2000**

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**Abstract**:

This paper contributes to our understanding of the power struggle for regulatory control between the states and the US federal government, especially during the *Progressive* and *Great Society* eras. By focusing on one substantial social insurance program – workers’ compensation insurance – the effects of competition between the federal government and the states over regulatory control are demonstrated. Calls for greater generosity in the early 1970s, and the threat of a federal takeover of workers’ compensation insurance induced dramatic and lasting changes. States reacted to the federal government’s recommendations and neighboring states’ actions by raising benefit levels. A comprehensive index of expected monetary wage-replacement benefits across the US between 1930 and 2000 is constructed to demonstrate the variation over time and across states.

**Keywords**: Political Economy, Workers Compensation

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