

## **California insurers lobby for sweeping changes to state law in ‘secret’ meetings**

Fox 2 KTVU

Insurers are reportedly engaged in negotiations with the California insurance commissioner and state legislators, seeking significant revisions to the state’s insurance laws before the conclusion of the legislative year.

Consumer Watchdog, a longtime consumer advocacy group, said insurers are working on a secret plan to gut current state insurance law. The group has requested that the California attorney general investigate insurers for secret collusion to create false insurance shortages.

Insurers are reportedly engaged in negotiations with the California insurance commissioner and state legislators, seeking significant revisions to the state’s insurance laws before the conclusion of the legislative year.

Consumer Watchdog, a longtime consumer advocacy group, said insurers are working on a secret plan to gut current state insurance law. The group has requested that the California attorney general investigate insurers for secret collusion to create false insurance shortages.

United Policyholders also believes that something is going on.

Amy Bach, executive director of United Policyholders, said, “There’s no question that the Senate and assembly leadership are having conversations with the commissioner, with the insurers, and probably with the builders, and possibly with the realtors.”

Consumer Watchdog said that insurers aim to implement new, untested computer models to automatically establish rates. Additionally, there is a proposal to include the actual cost of premiums that

insurers pay for disaster coverage in consumers' bills, a practice presently prohibited.

Rosenfield noted, "Deregulate insurance rates to eliminate the protections that the voters enacted in Proposition 103, which prevents price gouging."

Insurers are also suggesting substantial alterations to the California Fair Plan, a state-created insurance option that is controlled by insurers. When traditional insurers decline coverage, cancel policies, or refuse to issue additional policies in the state, the Fair Plan is the sole option available to consumers.

Rosenfield explained that insurers' proposals would significantly transform the Fair Plan by passing "any unforeseen losses not covered by premiums through to every policyholder in the state," essentially making the people of California insurers against wildfires.

United Policyholders anticipates the possibility of major, last-minute legislation emerging from these negotiations.

"I just hope that whatever come out of these deliberations is something balanced and fair and healthy for consumers and not a giveaway," said Bach.