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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hopper Smith Named Executive Director of Workers' Comp Commission



(Oklahoma City April 11, 2018) Workers' Compensation Commission (WCC): The Commission recently voted unanimously to hire retired Brigadier General Hopper Smith as the agency's new Executive Director. General Smith's employment as Executive Director will begin on May 1, 2018.

General Smith succeeds interim Executive Director Patricia Sommer who assumed that role following Kim Bailey who left to become COO of the State Health Department. Hopper will report directly to commissioners Liotta, Russell and Tilly.

As Executive Director, Hopper Smith will manage, and develop all operations and regulatory divisions of the WCC. Additionally, the Executive Director acts as a liaison between the three commissioners, and can represent the Commission to other state agencies.

Chairman Liotta said,

"Hopper Smith touches all the bases for a home run; in addition to leading small and large military units, Hopper has been a coach and a mentor, represented large private organizations, and served his state as a legislator. He operates with a sense of urgency, tempered by common sense and a sense of humor, with a compassion for people. I am confident Hopper's skills will help us continue to build our team."

Hopper has worked in a variety of positions related to national security policy and public affairs issues. He was elected to multiple terms in the Oklahoma House of Representatives beginning in 1996, from south Tulsa. He resigned his seat in 2003 when his National Guard unit was mobilized for deployment to combat operations in Afghanistan.

Commissioner Russell stated,

"General Smith's military management experience will strengthen the Commission's goals of expeditious and efficient administration. His service comes highly recommended by those who have worked with him in both the private and public sectors and from his State Capitol colleagues on both sides of the aisle."

Over the last decade Hopper has served in a number of roles including: Director of Government Relations for Chesapeake Energy; President of OCPA; and Director of Public Affairs for Devon Energy. In 2012 Hopper was promoted to Brigadier General and assigned as Assistant Adjutant General, Oklahoma National Guard.

Hopper received his BS in Geology from Oklahoma State University in 1986. He earned an MS in Strategic Intelligence from National Defense Intelligence College at the Defense Intelligence Agency in 2007. He earned his second MS in Strategic Studies from the US Army War College in 2010.

The Oklahoma's workers' compensation system was reformed in 2013, establishing the Administrative Workers' Compensation Act (Act). The Act created the Workers' Compensation Commission (WCC) which became fully operational effective February 1, 2014. The WCC provides a forum for workers' compensation hearings and appeals, ensures workers' compensation insurance compliance of employers, and regulates organizations who wish to self-fund their workers' compensation obligations.

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