

Tuesday, January 12, 2021

To the Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

The undersigned are pleased to support House Bill 1002 (Civil Immunity Related to COVID-19). Collectively, we represent thousands of Indiana businesses who employ hundreds of thousands of Hoosiers across the state. As Chambers of Commerce, we have been working as front line responders to employers as they navigated the significant impact this health pandemic has had on businesses - from closures, to laying off employees, to reopening and recovery. We believe that employer liability protections are necessary for employers who have followed health guidelines to feel the protection from the state in order to open and remain open. These protections are imperative for businesses to recover economically from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even when employers take all of the appropriate precautions to protect their employees from contracting COVID-19, there are always factors out of their control, such as the behavior of their customers and employees outside of the business. Employers who do everything they are supposed to do should not be held liable for events outside of their control.

We do realize that providing Civil Immunity Related to COVID-19 is but one piece to a larger puzzle which will allow businesses to return the workforce back to some sense of normalcy. This type of employer liability protection would allow businesses to reopen confidently prior to having successful vaccination distribution to the general public. While large corporations might be able to withstand the financial impact of lawsuits, a small/locally owned business could easily be bankrupt by the cost of even one lawsuit. This means that they could go out of business and their employees are out of jobs. Employer liability protection is good for both employers AND employees.

Thank you, Representative Torr for authoring this important piece of legislation, and thank you to Representatives Young, Jeter, and Lehman for co-authoring. If any member of the committee has questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact any one of us.

Sincerely,

Aspire Johnson County  
Greater Fort Wayne Inc.  
Greater Louisville Inc.  
Indy Chamber  
Northwest Indiana Forum  
One Southern Indiana  
OneZone Chamber of Commerce  
Regional Chamber of Northeast Indiana  
South Bend Regional Chamber of Commerce  
Southwest Indiana Chamber