

September 9, 2020

Wisconsin State Legislature:

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues in its fifth month, the threat of predatory lawsuits alleging liability for COVID-19 exposures is a major concern of businesses and many other entities, even if the property owner “did everything right” by complying with public health orders and taking all necessary precautions. We appreciate the work that the Legislature and Governor Evers have already done to protect healthcare workers and those businesses that donate personal protective equipment. However, as Wisconsin communities try to return to normal, Wisconsin businesses, non-profits, schools, and homeowners need protections, provided they take adequate precautions to keep their premises safe.

The undersigned organizations encourage all legislators to co-sponsor and support LRB-6434/2 circulated by Senator Kapenga, Representative Born, and Representative Knodl on September 1st, 2020. The legislation would create a safe harbor for all property owners/occupants who are good actors against frivolous lawsuits alleging a plaintiff was infected with COVID-19 at a specific premises. *The bill is not business community specific and would protect homeowners, non-profits, schools, universities, and any other premises including outdoor events and festivals.* The safe harbor would not protect bad actors. An entity would lose the liability exemption if they knowingly violated a public health order or spread COVID-19 by acting in a reckless, wanton, or intentional manner.

The Legislature needs to act quickly to protect businesses, non-profits, and individuals doing the right thing.

The below signed business associations and chambers of commerce respectfully urge you to co-sponsor and support LRB-6434/2, which will help rebuild Wisconsin’s communities and economy.

Sincerely,

Trade Associations

Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce
National Federation of Independent Businesses – Wisconsin
Wisconsin Civil Justice Council
Wisconsin Association of School Boards
Wisconsin Builders Association
Wisconsin Restaurant Association
Midwest Food Products Association
Wisconsin Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association
Wisconsin Independent Businesses
Associated Builders and Contractors of Wisconsin

Wisconsin Insurance Alliance
Wisconsin Agri-Business Association
Wisconsin Grocers Association
Plumbing Mechanical and Sheet Metal Contractors' Alliance
Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau
American Property and Casualty Insurance Association
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation
Commercial Association of Realtors Wisconsin
Bowling Centers Association of Wisconsin
Wisconsin Hotel & Lodging Association
Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association
Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association
Dairy Business Association
Tool, Die & Machining Association of Wisconsin
Wisconsin Bankers Association
*WEST*consin Credit Union
Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association
Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association
Wisconsin Soybean Association
Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association
Wisconsin Cattlemen Association
Venture Dairy Cooperative
Wisconsin Railroad Association
Wisconsin Ready Mixed Concrete Association
Wisconsin Beer Distributors Association
Wisconsin Institute of CPAs
Wisconsin Credit Union League
Wisconsin Society of Architects
Wisconsin Association of Professional Agricultural Consultants
Alliance of Wisconsin Retailers

Chambers of Commerce

Monroe Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Greater Wausau Chamber of Commerce
Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce
Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce
Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce
Sun Prairie Chamber of Commerce
Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce
Waukesha County Business Alliance
Beaver Dam Area Chamber of Commerce
Burlington Area Chamber of Commerce
Menomonie Area Chamber & Visitor Center

Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce
Hartford Area Chamber of Commerce
Greater Green Bay Chamber of Commerce
Marshfield Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Stoughton Chamber of Commerce
Heart of the Valley Chamber of Commerce
Portage County Business Council
Marinette Menominee Area Chamber of Commerce
Germantown Area Chamber of Commerce
Rice Lake Chamber of Commerce
Whitewater Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism
Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce
South Suburban Chamber of Commerce
Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau
Muskego Chamber of Commerce