

COVID-19 Liability Coalition Letter

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS:

The undersigned organizations urge you to include targeted and temporary liability protections as you consider President Biden's COVID relief package. As the Administration strives to reopen schools, protect our nation's health and strengthen our economy, these critical protections will help safeguard educational institutions, healthcare providers, businesses and non-profit organizations from unfair lawsuits.

The COVID-19 virus continues to rage throughout this country, presenting once-in-a-generation public health and economic challenges. Despite these difficulties, the development and distribution of vaccines give new hope for a future free of the crushing social and economic effects of the virus. Unfortunately, for many who remain on the front lines and continue to serve our communities during this pandemic, the threat of unfair litigation continues to loom. In 2020, over \$23 million was spent by plaintiffs' firms on COVID-19-related lawsuit advertisements, a clear indication that a litigation wave is lurking. As employers, educational institutions, and others answer President Biden's very appropriate call for face coverings and other protective steps, they should not have to worry that their actions will invite costly and unnecessary litigation.

The time for federal action implementing liability protections from such litigation is now. We thus urge you to include balanced liability relief provisions similar to last Congress' SAFE TO WORK ACT (S. 4317) in any further COVID-19 relief legislation. We believe that legislation in this space should ensure that unfair lawsuits will not hamper those who work to comply with applicable government guidelines. We also believe these protections should be limited in duration and scope in addition to preserving reasonable recourse for those harmed by truly bad actors.

Ensuring a bright post-pandemic future for our country's healthcare, business, and non-profit communities is a bipartisan objective. In the last round of COVID-19 relief negotiations, we were encouraged to see lawmakers from both sides of the aisle recognize the need for targeted and temporary liability relief. Lawmakers must come together now and ensure that the entities who continue to serve and protect their communities during this pandemic are themselves protected from unfair and harmful lawsuits.

In the wake of prior crises, Congress came together to pass needed liability protections with strong bipartisan support because lawmakers understood the acute threat of lawsuits at moments of maximum economic vulnerability. That threat is present again now. As such, Congress must take strong action now and provide a national baseline of liability protection during this national pandemic to prevent a wave of lawsuits from inhibiting our return to a robust economy and healthy citizenry.

Sincerely,