



The Leadership Conference  
on Civil and Human Rights

December 4, 2020

Dear Senator:

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and the 142 undersigned organizations write to urge you to oppose any legislative provision that provides businesses with immunity from COVID-related lawsuits, including the so-called “Safe to Work” Act. We firmly believe that Congress must act swiftly to address the current COVID-19 crisis and are encouraged to see bipartisan efforts to provide desperately needed relief. However, this relief should not come at the expense of the health and safety of consumers, workers, and patients.

Granting immunity would make the country less safe at the exact moment when the COVID-19 pandemic is entering a new, dangerous phase. This would be the worst time to disincentivize businesses and employers from doing everything they can to protect the health and safety of working people and consumers, including those in nursing homes and other congregate care facilities.

Furthermore, any type of immunity would directly harm Black, Latino, and other workers of color who are overrepresented in “essential” and in-person, reopened jobs—and expose them to increased risk of COVID-19 infection and death. As cases, hospitalizations, and fatalities continue to grow out of control nationwide, and as millions of people continue to face economic catastrophe, it would be shameful to provide protection to actors who fail to take reasonable actions to keep workers and consumers safe. In other words, immunity shifts the burden of these employers’ decisions onto those individuals who, because of a history of structural oppression and economic marginalization, are among the least able to bear the cost of illness and death.

Congress must do all it can to decrease the rate of infection and death, curb the spread of the virus, and provide support and resources to people who are suffering from the health and economic consequences of this pandemic. The inclusion of any part of the “Safe to Work” Act—or any other provision granting businesses and employers any type of immunity—in a COVID relief package is both unnecessary and contrary to responsible public policy. Please see the [previous letter](#) from The Leadership Conference and others on this topic. We urge you to oppose the inclusion of any immunity provision in a COVID package.

Please contact Gaylynn Burroughs, senior policy counsel at The Leadership Conference, at burroughs@civilrights.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

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LatinoJustice PRLDEF  
Legal Services Staff Association, UAW/NOLSW 2320  
Legal Voice  
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National Employment Law Project  
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SEIU Local 199  
SEIU Oregon  
Service Employees International Union  
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South Dakota Voices for Justice  
SPLC Action Fund  
Tax March  
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