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John C. Yang
Asian Americans Advancing Justice |
AAJC

December 4, 2020



The Leadership Conference
on Civil and Human Rights

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

President & CEO

Vanita Gupta

AFL-CIO
AFT Washington
Alabama Arise
Alianza Nacional de Campesinas
Alliance for Justice
American Association of University Women (AAUW)
Americans for Financial Reform
Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO
Bet Tzedek Legal Services
Blue Ridge Legal Services
Border Workers United
Center for Advocacy for the Rights & Interests of the Elderly
Center for Auto Safety
Center for Disability Rights
Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY
Center for Justice & Democracy
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Medicare Advocacy
Center for Popular Democracy
Center for Public Representation
Centro de los Derechos del Migrante
Colorado Fiscal Institute
Communications Workers of America (CWA)
Community Legal Services of Philadelphia
Consumer Action
Consumer Federation of America
Consumer Federation of California
Consumer Reports
Consumer Watchdog
Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety
CRLA Foundation
CT Working Families Party
Disability Law Center
Disability Law Colorado
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
Disability Rights Oregon
Disability Rights South Dakota
Disability Rights Vermont
Earth Action, Inc
Earthjustice
Economic Policy Institute
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)

Equal Justice Center
Equality North Carolina
Every Texan
Family Values @ Work
Food Chain Workers Alliance
Fund for Community Reparations for Autistic People of Color's Interdependence, Survival, & Empowerment
Futures Without Violence
Georgia Budget and Policy Institute
Harvard Parity Project
HEAL (Health, Environment, Agriculture, Labor) Food Alliance
Hispanic Federation
Impact Fund
Indiana Institute for Working Families
Indivisible
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Japanese American Citizens League
Justice for Migrant Women
Justice in Aging
KIDS FORWARD
KWH Law Center for Social Justice and Change
Labor and Employment Law Association, Seattle University School of Law
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Legal Services Staff Association, UAW/NOLSW 2320
Legal Voice
Long Beach Alliance for Clean Energy
Long Term Care Community Coalition
LULAC of Iowa - League of United Latin American Citizens of Iowa
Maine Small Business Coalition
Make the Road Nevada
Make the Road New York
Maryland Center on Economic Policy
Michigan Nurses Association
Michigan Parity Project
Missionary Oblates USP
Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights
MomsRising
Move to Amend Coalition
MSEA-SEIU Local 1989
NAACP
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF)
NAPAFASA
National Association of Consumer Advocates

National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Local Long Term Care Ombudsman (NALLTCO)
National Association of State Long Term Care Ombudsman Programs (NASOP)
National CAPACD- National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development
National Center for Law and Economic Justice
National Consumers League
National Continuing Care Residents Association
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans
National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Employment Lawyers Association
National Immigration Law Center
National Organization for Women
National Women's Law Center
National Workrights Institute
Native American Disability Law Center
New York Communities For Change
North Carolina Justice Center
OCA - Asian American Pacific Advocates
Oregon AFL-CIO
Oregon State Council for Retired Citizens/United Seniors of Oregon
Oxfam America
People's Parity Project
Public Citizen
Public Justice
Public Justice Center
Public Rights Project
SEIU Colorado
SEIU Healthcare Wisconsin
SEIU Local 199
SEIU Oregon
Service Employees International Union
Shriver Center on Poverty Law
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
South Dakota Voices for Justice
SPLC Action Fund
Tax March
Texas Watch
The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care
Towards Justice

U.S. PIRG
Unemployment Law Project
Union for Reform Judaism
Union of Concerned Scientists
United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW)
Virginia Poverty Law Center
Western New York Council on Occupational Safety And Health
Women Employed
Women's Law Project
Worker Justice Center of New York
Workers Center of Central NY
Workplace Fairness
Workplace Justice Project at Loyola Law Clinic
Worksafe