



**Testimony to House Committee on Judiciary
Supporting Liability Protections due to COVID-19 on SB 14
January 19, 2021
The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce**

The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce (KC Chamber) urges the House Committee on Judiciary to favorably pass SB 14 legislation which will continue to protect Kansas businesses from frivolous lawsuits brought about by COVID-19. As Kansas looks to keep its economy open, businesses across the state need legal and regulatory safe harbor legislation to curb liabilities for employers who follow official health and safety guidelines. The KC Chamber, representing nearly 2,000 businesses (40% of which are in Kansas), strongly believes continuing these needed protections reassures businesses that they can confidently and safely stay open or reopen.

Our members tell us that they want to make sure that they are not held liable should employees, customers, or others contract COVID-19. While we agree that individuals with legitimate grievances should have a reasonable course for justice against a company that acted negligently and knowingly put the health of workers at risk, we believe that misguided and frivolous litigation can not only prevent businesses from reopening but can also force scores of businesses to close their doors and cause thousands of workers to become jobless. If a business does its best to comply with CDC, OSHA, state and local public health recommendations, a business should be afforded a safe harbor against litigation.

As we look to keep businesses open in the state, it makes sense that the State of Kansas should try to help mitigate legal risks by offering businesses protection against frivolous coronavirus-related lawsuits. Common-sense reforms have been passed across the country. Kansas should not be an exception and reverse course on this legislation. Meaningful protections will help keep thousands of Kansans working and remove one more barrier for businesses as they work to reopen, stay open, and support the state's economic recovery.

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