

Please Oppose SB 51

October 15, 2021

The undersigned organizations respectfully oppose SB 51 and similar legislation or amendments (including any amendments to SB 8). We believe strongly that legislation of this kind represents an unprecedented intrusion into the liberty of employers to operate their businesses as they see fit. Texas' successful business climate is premised upon this fundamental liberty, but this legislation undermines it by placing employers in an impossible position between federal and state mandates. It will also subject employers to potentially crippling litigation costs at *both* the federal and state levels with no ability to protect themselves against this risk. We therefore believe that these proposals can do extreme damage to the economic recovery currently under way and to the state's ability to attract new businesses in the future.

Additionally, during the regular session the Legislature passed, by a nearly unanimous vote, and the Governor signed SB 6, which provides among the strongest liability protections for businesses and health care providers in the country against liability related to the COVID-19 response. SB 6 has played a primary role in giving businesses the confidence and freedom to increase their workforces and get the economy moving again. SB 51, however, undoes a substantial portion of those protections by opening the door once again to employer liability at both the administrative and judicial levels. While the types of remedies and damages proposed by these bills differ somewhat, the effect is the same. We appreciate that policymakers have good faith differences of opinion about government mandates of any kind, but enforcement by private litigation aimed specifically at job creators will be harmful to everyone, employers and employees alike.

Associated General Contractors –
Texas Building Branch
Associated General Contractors of Texas
Corpus Christi United Chamber of Commerce
Dallas Regional Chamber
El Paso Chamber of Commerce
Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce
Greater Houston Partnership
Houston Methodist Hospital
Independent Insurance Agents of Texas
Martin Resource Management Corporation
NFIB-Texas
North Texas Commission
Precast Concrete Manufacturers Association
Texans for Lawsuit Reform
Texas Alliance of Brain Injury Providers
Texas Association of Business
Texas Association of Manufacturers
Texas REALTORS®
Texas Association of Staffing

Texas Chemical Council
Texas Civil Justice League
Texas Health Care Association
Texas Hospital Association
Texas Hotel & Lodging Association
Texas Impact
Texas Medical Association
Texas Recreational Vehicle Association
Texas Society of CPAs
Texas Society for Human
Resource Management
League City Regional Chamber of Commerce
West Chambers County Chamber of Commerce
Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce
Partnership Lake Houston
Columbus Chamber of Commerce
& Visitors Bureau
Baytown Chamber of Commerce
Texas Trucking Association