

# WMC: Calls on Legislature and Gov. Evers to protect Wisconsinites from frivolous COVID-19 lawsuits

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MADISON – Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC) – the combined state chamber, manufacturers’ association and safety council – is calling on lawmakers to support new legislation that would protect businesses, individuals and others from frivolous lawsuits related to COVID-19. The bill – LRB-6434/2 – would create a safe harbor for all property owners or occupants who are good actors against frivolous lawsuits alleging a plaintiff was infected with COVID-19 at a specific premise.

“While businesses and communities are coming together to take on the challenges associated with COVID-19, there are unfortunately an increasing number of trial lawyers looking to profit off of this crisis,” said Scott Manley, WMC Executive Vice President of Government Relations. “Now is the time to protect all Wisconsinites from these needless and frivolous lawsuits.”

The legislation was recently introduced by Sen. Chris Kapenga, Rep. Mark Born and Rep. Dan Knodl. [In a memo to legislators](#), WMC explains that the bill is not business community specific and would protect homeowners, non-profits, schools, universities and any other premises including outdoor events and festivals. Additionally, an entity would lose the liability exemption if they knowingly violated a public health order or spread COVID-19 by acting in a reckless, wanton or intentional manner.

“This is a common-sense policy that has broad public support,” added Manley. “WMC and our members encourage legislators and Gov. Evers to support this bill. We thank Sen. Kapenga and Reps. Born and Knodl for introducing this important legislation.”

According to a [U.S. Chamber of Commerce poll](#), 84-percent of respondents believe that essential businesses, and 82-percent of respondents believe that all businesses, should be protected from lawsuits related to the coronavirus. Similarly,

according to a recent [NFIB survey](#), nearly 70-percent of small business owners are concerned about increases in liability claims as they reopen. The bill is currently being circulated for co-sponsorship.