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Promoting Fairness and Equity in Wisconsin's Civil Justice System

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 23, 2021

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Governor Evers: Businesses, Schools Need Liability Protection

Please Sign January 2021 Special Session SB 1 into Law

SB 1, awaiting action by Governor Evers, would protect Wisconsin businesses, schools, universities, and other entities from the threat of predatory lawsuits alleging liability for COVID-19 exposures, an invisible virus spreading throughout our communities. Such protections would *only* apply to those who take adequate precautions to keep their premises safe. SB 1 passed the state Senate on a bipartisan vote of 27-3 and was concurred in by the state Assembly on a bipartisan vote of 89-0.

The Wisconsin Civil Justice Council is a group of 15 business associations that work together in the State Capitol to enact civil liability reforms. “SB 1 would protect businesses, schools, and non-profits that ‘do the right thing’ to safeguard their workers and the public from predatory lawsuits. We support SB 1 and ask Governor Evers to sign it into law,” said Wisconsin Civil Justice Council executive director R.J. Pirlot.

Business owners, large and small, worry they may become victims of lawsuits even as they struggle with the financial challenges, regulatory burdens, and economic uncertainty associated with rebuilding their businesses. “I urge Governor Evers to sign SB 1 into law. SB 1 would give Wisconsin’s small businesses a needed level of certainty that they will be protected from such liability and would help ensure they are comfortable reopening and staying open.” said Bill G. Smith, NFIB’s State Director in Wisconsin and the president of the Wisconsin Civil Justice Council.

According to Scott Manley, executive vice president of government relations of Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce and vice president of the Wisconsin Civil Justice Council, “WMC also strongly supports the liability protections in SB 1, and we appreciate the bipartisan work done by the Assembly and the Senate to elevate the importance of protecting Wisconsinites from predatory lawsuits at a time when they can least afford it. Signing SB 1 into law would protect Wisconsin businesses and others from costly and opportunistic lawsuits.”

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