



House Industry Business & Labor Committee – HB 1175

Representative Mike Lefor, Chair

January 27, 2021

Chairman Lefor, Members of the Committee:

My name is Brian Ritter and I'm President of the Bismarck Mandan Chamber EDC. Please accept this testimony on behalf of our organization's approximately 1,200 members in support of HB 1175.

Over the past year, Bismarck-Mandan businesses have adjusted to a 'new normal' brought about by COVID-19. This includes implementing new policies, creating new business practices and adapting to new federal and state regulations. Despite all of their hard work, many of our members have a growing concern that continued COVID-19 infections may make them vulnerable to civil liability lawsuits.

We are proud to join a coalition of more than 25 business organizations from around the State in support of HB 1175, which offers:

- Businesses protection from civil liability lawsuits when they acted in good faith and followed applicable COVID-19 laws and regulation.

- Protection for health care facilities and health care providers who responded quickly to the COVID-19 pandemic with uncertain guidance.

- Assistance to manufacturers who quickly adapted to meet the demands for PPE, ventilators and more brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our organization's 2021 Legislative Agenda states that the Chamber EDC will, "*Support legislation that provides employers liability protection if they follow federal and state guidance for re-opening and establishing safety practices, including adverse employment actions.*" HB 1175 does just that and consequently, we fully support it.

Thank you for your consideration.