

June 29, 2020

Chairman Westerfield, Chairman Petrie, and members of the Interim Joint Committee on Judiciary:

Greater Louisville Inc., The Metro Chamber of Commerce, appreciates the Committee allotting time to the issue of COVID-19-related liabilities for businesses at its upcoming meeting on July 9<sup>th</sup>. GLI represents more than 1,700 businesses and organizations throughout the Greater Louisville region, which includes 10 counties in north-central Kentucky. Since the Commonwealth began reopening its economy last month, legal liability has become one of the concerns we have heard about most frequently from our members. **Employers – who are trying to do the right thing and follow public health and safety guidelines – fear they could become the target of frivolous lawsuits by individuals seeking to take advantage of the uncertainty created by the COVID-19 pandemic.**

The concerns we are hearing from our regional business community are grounded in real-life experiences. At the time of writing, more than [2,000 lawsuits](#) related to COVID-19 have already been filed in state and federal courts. Even if these lawsuits are dismissed, they still consume time, energy, and resources. Businesses are facing tremendous pressures in seeking to protect their employees, customers, and vendors as well as simply trying to keep their lights on and get our economy going again. The threat of litigation adds an additional layer of challenges for businesses to navigate during these already trying times.

GLI has been active in communicating these concerns to policymakers. We informed members of our congressional delegation and joined a coalition of business and civic organizations to send a letter to Governor Andy Beshear. The most meaningful actions to address the concerns of Kentucky businesses, however, will need to come from the Kentucky General Assembly. We urge members of this Committee to take the lead on this vitally important issue by beginning the process of establishing strong legal liability protections for businesses against frivolous claims related to COVID-19. These protections will help businesses return our economy to the growth levels of the past few years and allow employers to continue working to protect their employees and the public from COVID-19 without the threat of opportunistic litigation.

Sincerely,



Sarah Davasher-Wisdom  
President & CEO  
Greater Louisville Inc.