

Statewide Email

DATE: March 30, 2021

FROM: Henry Mack, Chancellor, Career and Adult Education

TO: District Career and Technical Education Directors
District Technical College Directors
Florida College System Workforce Administrators

Via: Chancellor2@fldoe.org

SUBJECT: FW: Governor Ron DeSantis Signs SB 72 – Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19

Colleagues,

You may be aware of the recent legislation on liability protection for claims related to COVID-19. Please see below. Lines 158-161 of the attached bill define “educational institution” as “a school, including a preschool, elementary school, middle school, junior high school, secondary school, career center, or postsecondary school, whether public or nonpublic.” It is the intent of the Legislature for these educational institutions to enjoy “heightened legal protections” against liability as a result of the pandemic.

Please let me know if you have any questions,

Henry

Henry Mack
Chancellor of Career and Adult Education

From: Governor's Press Office <Governor'sPressOffice@eog.myflorida.com>

Sent: Monday, March 29, 2021 5:17 PM

To: Kelly, Alex <Alex.Kelly@fldoe.org>

Subject: Governor Ron DeSantis Signs SB 72 – Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19



For Immediate Release: March 29, 2021

Contact: Governor's Press Office, (850) 717-9282, Media@eog.myflorida.com

Governor Ron DeSantis Signs SB 72 – Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19

Tallahassee, Fla. – Today, Governor Ron DeSantis signed CS/SB 72 – Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19. The bill provides crucial liability protection to individuals, businesses, educational institutions, religious organizations, and health care providers for liability claims related to COVID-19.

Governor DeSantis was joined at the bill signing by Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis, Senate President Wilton Simpson, Florida House Speaker Chris Sprowls and members of the respective chambers. Also in attendance at the event was Highway 85, a Tallahassee-based band whose presence was to highlight an industry that has been curtailed due to liability concerns from COVID-19.

“Over the course of the past year, our state’s businesses, health care providers and other organizations have been forced to operate in fear of frivolous lawsuits with no merit threatening their livelihoods,” **said Governor Ron DeSantis.** “Thanks to the hard work of President Simpson, Speaker Sprowls, and quick passage by the House and Senate, that fear ends today

with my signing of SB 72, which provides much-needed liability protections against COVID-19 related litigation. As we move forward in our state's economic recovery, this good piece of legislation will provide Floridians with greater peace of mind as they go to work, go to school, and go about their daily lives."

"Businesses across Florida have done all they can to safely reopen and keep people employed during a period of extreme uncertainty. Additionally, our hardworking and dedicated health care providers have been on the front lines of this pandemic from day one, putting their own health in jeopardy to help others," **said Senate President Wilton Simpson**. "SB 72 will protect those who have served our state in this unprecedented time of need. It is an honor to join Governor DeSantis and Speaker Sprowls to watch this bill become law."

"This law is a victory for all Floridians. It keeps Florida's economy open, saves jobs, and protects businesses against frivolous lawsuits while ensuring that lawsuits with merit can move forward," **said Florida House Speaker Chris Sprowls**. "Starting now, businesses and health care providers who are doing the right thing won't have to work and live in fear that a frivolous COVID lawsuit could jeopardize their livelihood. I am proud of the collaboration between the Florida House and Senate to deliver this good bill to Governor DeSantis' desk and to see it signed into law today."

"I was proud to stand with Governor Ron DeSantis today as he signed vital COVID-19 liability protections into Florida law to protect our businesses, job creators, and our health care heroes," **said CFO Jimmy Patronis**. "This is a huge win for Florida and a major step to get Florida's economy back on its feet and ensure our state fully recovers from this pandemic. As my top priority this legislative session, I was proud to travel the state fighting for these critical protections. No doubt, this is the single most important piece of legislation that unifies families in our state and a huge milestone for businesses and health care workers who no longer have to live in fear of frivolous COVID-19 litigation. By passing this significant legislation, the Governor and Legislature have stepped up to give businesses the confidence they have needed to keep their doors open and continue to serve their communities."

Among other measures, CS/SB 72 provides immunity from COVID-19 related claims for individuals, businesses, schools, and houses of worship if a good faith effort was made to comply with health standards and guidance related to COVID-19. The bill also creates strong affirmative defenses for health care providers that substantially complied with and relied upon health standards.

A PDF copy of CS/SB 72 can be found [HERE](#).

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