



For Immediate Release

October 1, 2020

Contact

AIF: [Sarah Bascom](#) / [Kristen McDonald Grissom](#)

**AIF, FRF, NFIB & FRLA's RESET Task Force
Releases COVID-19 Liability Protection Recommendations**
Additional policy recommendations to be announced later this month

Tallahassee, Fla. – The Associated Industries of Florida (AIF), Florida Retail Federation (FRF), National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) and Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association (FRLA)'s RESET Task Force today released its liability protection policy recommendations aimed at protecting Florida businesses from future COVID-19-related lawsuits. These recommendations were developed by the RESET Task Force's Legal Reform Working Group, led by co-chairs William Large, President of the Florida Justice Reform Institute, and Marc Salm, Vice President of Rick Management for Publix. The Task Force's complete list of recommendations across all issue areas will be released later this month.

“For several months now, members of the RESET Task Force have been discussing how to address the uncertainty and concerns of businesses operating during the coronavirus pandemic. The one initiative that was repeatedly raised across all industries was liability protections,” said Brewster Bevis, AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs and co-chair of the RESET Task Force. “We applaud Governor DeSantis for ensuring this issue is a state priority. As a top priority for Florida businesses as well, the RESET Task Force is proud to release these liability protection recommendations now to help facilitate the discussion on how best to protect businesses as our state continues to safely reopen.”

The RESET Task Force's liability protection policy recommendations include:

- Exempting essential businesses entirely from COVID-19 liability;
- A heightened culpability standard: to establish liability, the defendant must have acted with gross negligence or intentional conduct;
- A heightened evidentiary standard: clear and convincing evidence is required to establish liability, rather than a mere preponderance of the evidence;
- A shortened statute of limitations so that businesses will not face COVID-19 liability years after the pandemic has passed; and
- Protections for employers from employees' COVID-19 related claims, including in any enforcement actions brought under state law, so long as the employer complied with applicable guidelines.

“The business community thanks Governor DeSantis for his strong support and steadfast leadership throughout the pandemic. However, as businesses begin to fully reopen, many fear the threat of being sued. Liability protection initiatives, such as those outlined by the RESET Task Force, would help protect Florida businesses while they continue getting Floridians back to work and serving their communities,” said William Large, co-chair of the RESET Task Force's Legal Reforms Working Group.

The RESET Task Force was formed to focus on providing industry-specific policy recommendations to the Florida Legislature and bringing forth initiatives that will seek to help all of Florida's economy rebound from the effects of COVID-19 and future economic slowdowns. The task force is comprised of 60 organizations – a complete list, in alphabetical order, is below:

Airlines for America	Florida Institute of CPAs
American Property & Casualty Insurance Association	Florida Justice Reform Institute
American Resort Developers Association	Florida League of Cities
Asphalt Contractors Association of Florida	FloridaMakes
Associated Builders & Contractors of Florida	Florida Natural Gas Association
Associated Industries of Florida	Florida Nursery, Growers & Landscape Association
Community Associations Institute	Florida Nonprofit Alliance
Consumer Energy Alliance	Florida Petroleum Council
Defensewerx	Florida Ports Council
Film Florida	Florida Propane Association
First Coast Manufacturers Associations	Florida Public Transportation Association
Florida Assisted Living Association	Florida Realtors
Florida Association of Broadcasters	Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association
Florida Association of Counties	Florida Retail Federation
Florida Association of Health Plans	Florida Senior Living Association
Florida Attractions Association	Florida State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Florida Bankers Association	Florida TaxWatch
Florida Beverage Association	Florida United Businesses Association
Florida Carpenters Regional Council	Florida Transportation Builders Association
Florida Citrus Mutual	Florida Trucking Association
Florida Council of 100	GrowFL
Florida Credit Union Association	Independent Colleges & Universities of Florida
Florida Farm Bureau	International Council of Shopping Centers
Florida Health Care Association	Manufacturers Association of Florida
Florida Home Builders Association	Manufacturing Association of Central Florida
Florida Hospital Association	National Federation of Independent Business
Florida Independent Automobile Dealers Association	Pensacola Chamber of Commerce
Florida Independent Petroleum Producers Association	Sarasota Manatee Manufacturers Association
Florida Insurance Council	South Florida Manufacturers Association
Florida Internet & Television	Step Up For Students

In addition, the RESET Employer Advisory Group is comprised of the following companies:

American Airlines	Hackney Nursey
American Integrity Insurance	Johnson & Johnson Vision
American Traditions Insurance Company	Marriott
Anheuser-Busch	Mosaic
AT&T	Norfolk Southern
Bealls	Northrop Grumman
Charter Communications	Publix
Comcast NBCUniversal	RaceTrac
Community Health Systems	Rayonier Advanced Materials
CSX	Savour Restaurant
Disney	Sentry Insurance
Duke Energy	Spoor Bunch Franz
Enterprise Holdings	Travelers Insurance
Fenco Farms	United States Sugar Corporation
Florida Blue	Universal Health Services
Florida Power & Light	Universal Parks and Resorts

Walgreens
Walmart

WestRock
Willie Jewels BBQ/Tally Fish House

The RESET Task Force is co-chaired by AIF Senior Vice President of State & Federal Affairs Brewster Bevis, FRF President & CEO Scott Shalley, NFIB Executive Director Bill Herrle and FRLA President & CEO Carol Dover. Dr. Ed Moore, former President of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida, serves as the task force's executive director and Craig Fugate, former FEMA Administrator, serves as a senior advisor.

###

About AIF

Known as “The Voice of Florida Business” in the Sunshine State, Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) has represented the principles of prosperity and free enterprise before the three branches of state government since 1920. A voluntary association of diversified businesses, AIF was created to foster an economic climate in Florida conducive to the growth, development, and welfare of industry and business and the people of the state. For more information on AIF, please visit AIF.com and follow [@VoiceofFLBiz](https://twitter.com/VoiceofFLBiz).

About FRF

The Florida Retail Federation (FRF) is the statewide trade association representing retailers -- the businesses that sell directly to consumers. Florida retailers provide one out of every five jobs in the state, pay more than \$49 billion in wages annually, and collect and remit more than \$20 billion in sales taxes for Florida's government each year. For more information on FRF, please visit FRF.org.

About NFIB

The National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) is the voice of small business, advocating on behalf of America's small and independent business owners, both in Washington, D.C., and in all 50 state capitals. NFIB is nonprofit, nonpartisan, and member-driven. Since our founding in 1943, NFIB has been exclusively dedicated to small and independent businesses, and remains so today. For more information on NFIB, please visit NFIB.com.

About FRLA

The Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association (FRLA) is Florida's premier non-profit hospitality industry trade association, representing more than 10,000 members including independent hoteliers and restaurateurs, household name franchises, theme parks, and suppliers. The association's mission is to protect, educate and promote Florida's \$111.7 billion hospitality industry, which represents 1.5 million employees. For more information on FRLA, please visit FRLA.org and follow [@FRLAnews](https://twitter.com/FRLAnews).