



## **MEDIA CONTACT:**

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## **ABI Opposes Vaccine Mandate Bill**

*ABI continues to protect private business interests in response to the uncertainty this latest legislation will create for employers*

DES MOINES, Iowa – The Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI), Iowa’s largest employer association with 1,500 members representing 330,000 employees, is opposed to the Iowa Legislature’s decision to pass its vaccine mandate bill that allows Iowans who are discharged from employment for refusing to get a COVID-19 vaccine to collect unemployment benefits from the state’s employer-funded unemployment trust fund.

Iowa lawmakers launched this bill in response to the Biden Administration’s COVID-19 vaccine mandate for employers with more than 100 employees, federal contractors and businesses that receive federal reimbursements for health care services. ABI does not support mandates at both the state and federal level and continues to assert the Biden Administration’s vaccine mandate is misguided. However, this legislation the Iowa Legislature approved now puts employers at risk of possibly facing federal penalties of up to \$14,000 per violation.

Furthermore, if there is a large number of claims filed by workers, even Iowa businesses complying with the new legislation could soon face increased financial liability through additional unemployment tax levies to maintain a solvent unemployment trust fund. To ABI’s knowledge, no other state has passed similar legislation allowing workers who are discharged for refusing the vaccine to collect unemployment insurance.

**ABI was the only business organization that stood in opposition to this bill** and the organization remains committed to protecting private business interests. ABI’s employers were deemed essential businesses at the start of the pandemic and business leaders implemented policies to keep their companies running while taking care of their employees. This legislation is counterproductive to an immediate need of Iowa’s business climate: a robust workforce. ABI continues to strongly urge all Iowans to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and rejects this rushed decision by Iowa lawmakers to institute a blanket policy that is counter to an individual employer’s right to decide what works best for their workplace.

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