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93rd General Assembly
October 4, 2021 – Session Day 267

***** CALL TO ACTION *****

Earlier today the Senate passed three bills that will be heard in the House Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee at 8 a.m., Tuesday morning. Those bills are **SB 730**, **SB 732**, and **SB 739**.

State Chamber/AIA President & CEO Randy Zook plans to testify against these bills and says, “These bills interfere with the fundamental right of an employer to decide what is best for their business.”

Please ask your State Representative to vote NO on SB 730, SB 732, and SB 739.

Here are brief summaries of each bill:

SB 730 by Senator Trent Garner seeks to prohibit disqualification from unemployment benefits on the basis of a person’s refusal to be vaccinated against Covid-19 or its variants or based on a person’s termination due solely to reusing to be vaccinated against Covid-19 or its variants.

SB 732 by Sen. Blake Johnson seeks to prohibit employers from requiring COVID vaccination if the immunization is medically contraindicated for the individual, or if they assert an objection to the vaccine on religious or philosophical grounds. It would authorize affected employees to seek lost wages

SB 739 by Sen. Kim Hammer and Rep. Joshua Bryant would require employers to provide exemptions from COVID vaccine mandates for employees who provide evidence of recent negative tests or of the presence of COVID antibodies. It would require the cost of testing to be covered through either the employee's health benefit plan or through state or federal funding including relief funds distributed through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

STATE CHAMBER CONCERNS

Adoption of these will expose some employers to having to choose between

obeying state or federal laws. Such conflict can:

- Cause employers to lose liability protections
- Be subject to OSHA fines and penalties
- Cause exposure to EEOC violations
- Prevent employers from instituting policies they deem necessary to protect the health and safety of their customers and assure their customers and consumers that steps are being taken to help keep them safe.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION INFORMATION

To view schedules, calendars, bill information, and legislator information, click www.arkleg.state.ar.us.

Legislative Message Center

House of Representatives: 501-682-6211

Senate: 501-682-2902

Live Streaming from the Capitol

The House and Senate have links to live streaming of their committee meetings and floor session online.

- House: <https://www.arkansashouse.org/>
- Senate: <http://www.arkansas.gov/senate/>

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