



**State Representative Barbara Smith Warner
House District 45**

June 25, 2020

Co-Chair Kotek, Co-Chair Courtney and members of the committee,

I write today in opposition to the -11 and -38 amendments to House Bill 4212.

I am concerned that enacting a corporate immunity bill hastily, without much-needed due diligence on this very complicated legal issue, could have multiple unintended consequences. I worry that it could create disincentives for otherwise law-abiding employers to take necessary steps to fully protect their workers. This could lead to a health and safety disaster, with new hot spots emerging across sectors and spreading across communities. We must ensure that all employers are accountable for following basic precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Further, I am concerned that frontline workers and the public would be at increased risk of COVID-19 infection. We have to acknowledge that this would disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous and people of color Oregonians who are already disproportionately feeling the health and economic impacts of this current crisis. Frontline essential workers are keeping our state afloat through this crisis, and they are already facing enormous risk to their health and safety. While it's important to make sure employers are supported in reopening, we can't do it at the expense of essential workers.

A bipartisan workgroup is being convened by House Speaker Tina Kotek with agreement from House Republican Leader Christine Drazan to more extensively work on these issues in the coming weeks and come up with a way to ensure that protections are in place without further harming workers. I am hopeful they will be able to balance these many important considerations. I strongly believe we should let that group do its work and come back with recommendations for the legislature to consider.

Sincerely,

Rep. Barbara Smith Warner
House District 45
Oregon House Majority Leader