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News from the Michigan Association for Justice

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MAJ: Unemployed Workers Are NOT Political Pawns

Republicans tie unemployment insurance extension to COVID business immunity

LANSING—Michigan Association for Justice (MAJ) President Donna MacKenzie today blasted a move by Republicans that would only grant extended unemployment benefits if a package of COVID business immunity bills clears the Senate and is signed by the governor.

“It is appalling that Republicans would play this disgusting political game during a global pandemic that has ravaged our state. Families have been devastated. We are grieving the loss of parents, children, friends, and neighbors. Thousands of people have either lost or had to leave their jobs through no fault of their own.

Unemployed workers and their families are not political pawns. House and Senate Republicans know that a majority of legislative Democrats and the governor are opposed to their scheme to give total immunity to unscrupulous business owners—including nursing homes—who are negligent, break the law, and refuse to follow safety guidelines. Tying needed unemployment relief to COVID business immunity is nothing more than a cynical attempt to strong-arm our governor while holding unemployed workers and their families hostage. This is politics at its worst, and Michiganders deserve better.”

[SB 886](#), passed by the Senate, would ensure those with COVID-19 or caring for a loved one with COVID-19 are able to receive an expanded 26 weeks of unemployment insurance as opposed to the standard 20. The bill is tie-barred to COVID business immunity bills that recently passed the Michigan House of Representatives: [HB 6030](#), [HB 6031](#), [HB 6032](#), and [HB 6101](#). The bills are expected to be taken up for votes in the House and Senate on Tuesday.

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*The **Michigan Association for Justice**, formerly the Michigan Trial Lawyers Association (MTLA), is a professional association of over 1,500 plaintiff's attorneys and staff, with offices in Lansing, Michigan.*