



# **Durbin: We Need Federal Workplace Safety Standards To Protect Workers And Consumers During COVID-19**

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) today participated in a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing that examined Republican proposals to give businesses liability immunity during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the hearing, Durbin said that protecting health and safety must be the first priority, not giving corporations immunity when people get sick or when workers are forced to work in unsafe conditions.

“I wish this hearing was entitled 'why has our government failed to produce science based standards of worker safety and healthy business environments in this age of COVID-19?' Durbin said. “When tell me that 162 of members – working at grocery stores or meat processing – have died and 25,000 have been infected, those are numbers that stop me cold. I know what it is like...working for 12 months at a meat plant in East. St. Louis, and it’s a hot, dirty, and dangerous job on a good day. Not much has changed.”

Durbin called for clear, comprehensive, and enforceable federal standards, through the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), for workplace safety across the country so companies understand what steps need to be taken to protect their employees and customers and can meet those steps responsibly.

“We have got to have reasonable standards that make sense in the age of COVID-19,” Durbin said.

Footage of Durbin’s remarks at today’s hearing is available [here](#).

Video of Durbin’s remarks at today’s hearing is available [here](#).

Audio of Durbin's remarks at today's hearing is available [here](#).