

# **Attorney General Raoul Announces Legislation To Expand Worker Protections Against Retaliation**

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CHICAGO - Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced legislation that would protect workers from retaliatory conduct by employers, strengthen current protections under state law and codify the authority of Raoul's Workplace Rights Bureau to investigate and hold employers who retaliate or threaten to retaliate accountable.

“Currently, workers who want to assert their basic workplace rights risk losing their livelihood and ability to provide for themselves and their families. For some immigrant workers, asserting their rights means risking their ability to remain in the United States,” Raoul said. “We must encourage workers to step up and report dangerous or unlawful practices, and I look forward to continuing to work with members of the Illinois General Assembly to pass these needed reforms.”

Raoul’s legislation – contained in House Bill (HB) 5561 – would fill existing voids in labor enforcement that leave workers unprotected from often-devastating employer retaliation when they seek to enforce their rights or blow the whistle on unlawful employer practices.

Specifically, the legislation would:

- Broaden the scope of conduct protected under the Illinois Whistleblower Act to protect employees who report violations of the law or threats to public health and safety directly to their employer.
- Expand the definition of retaliation to include blacklisting an employee from future opportunities and immigration-based retaliation.
- Provide express statutory authority to the Attorney General’s office to bring suit against employers who retaliate or threaten retaliation against employees.

HB 5561 is sponsored in the Illinois House of Representatives by Assistant Majority Leader Marcus C. Evans, Jr. and passed the House’s Judiciary Civil-Committee on Wednesday.

“I introduced HB 5561 to ensure workers are protected from retaliatory action and empowered to stand up when illegal or unsafe practices occur in the workplace,” Leader Evans said. “I thank Attorney General Raoul for his leadership on this issue, and I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Illinois House to pass this important worker protection legislation.”

Attorney General Raoul’s Workplace Rights Bureau protects and advances the employment rights of all Illinois residents, particularly the state’s most vulnerable residents and immigrant populations. The bureau investigates and litigates cases involving serious or persistent wage law violations or other significant employment practices, and monitors and proposes legislation concerning labor and employment issues.

Attorney General Raoul encourages workers who wish to file a complaint about an employer’s practices to call the Workplace Rights Hotline at 1-844-740-5076 or visit the [Attorney General’s website](#).

