

CO-SPONSORSHIP MEMORANDUM

To: All Legislators

From: Representatives Robert Brooks; Dan Knodl, and Rick Gundrum and Senator Duey Stroebel

Date: Thursday, August 12, 2021

Re: Co-sponsorship of LRB-4392/1 and LRB-4414/1 - relating to: eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits in the case of an unwillingness to receive a vaccine.

Deadline: Thursday, August 18, 2021

Individual liberty is the bedrock of a free republic and must be respected and protected. The decision of whether or not to get the COVID-19 vaccine is a decision to be made by individuals, not government bureaucrats or employers.

Current law stipulates that if an individual is terminated by an employer or voluntarily terminates his or her employment, the individual is ineligible to receive unemployment insurance (UI) benefits until a certain amount of time elapses and/or the individual earns a certain amount of wages through subsequent employment.

This bill creates an exemption to these disqualification requirements for an individual who is terminated by an employer or voluntarily terminates his or her employment due to an unwillingness, as a condition of continued employment, to receive the COVID-19 vaccine or furnish proof of having been vaccinated against COVID-19.

Individuals are better able to determine their personal healthcare needs than government bureaucrats, elected officials, or employers. Protecting those rights is of paramount importance. Compulsory COVID-19 vaccination policies not only infringe on individual liberties, but also abandon informed consent, lack a proper risk-benefit analysis and fail to account for prior infections – despite the [well-established and growing body of research demonstrating that natural immunity confers at least as robust protection as vaccine-acquired immunity.](#)

If you are interested in co-sponsoring this legislation, please reply to this e-mail or call Representative Rob Brooks' office at 7-2369 or Senator Duey Stroebel's office at 6-7513 by **Thursday, August 18, 2021 at 5:00 P.M.** You will be automatically added to the senate bill unless directed otherwise.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Under current law, unless an exemption applies, if an individual quits his or her job, the individual is ineligible to receive unemployment insurance (UI) benefits until the individual earns wages or certain other amounts after the week in which the individual quits to at least six times the individual's weekly UI benefit rate. This bill creates an exemption for an individual who terminates his or her work due to the employee's unwillingness, as a condition of continued employment, to receive a vaccine against the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus or furnish proof of having done so.

Also under current law, an individual may be disqualified from receiving UI benefits if he or she is terminated because of misconduct or substantial fault. The bill specifically provides that an employee's unwillingness, as a condition of continued employment, to receive a vaccine against the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus or furnish proof of having done so, does not constitute misconduct or substantial fault.

For further information see the local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.