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## FCAN Opposes Sen. Brandes' Bill SB 74 to Exempt the Medical Industry from COVID-19 Liability

### For Additional Information:

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**St. Petersburg, FLA.** – Florida Consumer Action Network (FCAN) today released a statement opposing Sen. Jeff Brandes' new Senate Bill 74 to exempt the medical industry from any liability arising from reckless or careless actions that spread COVID-19. Brandes previously sponsored SB 72 which would exempt every other business from this liability, and he now wants to add in medical corporations such as nursing homes and hospitals.

Regarding SB 74, the health care provider bill, Susan McGrath, FCAN Executive Director said, **"This bill does nothing for our front-line workers.** What it really does is protect hospitals, nursing homes, and other corporations that might injure patients or workers. The workers Brandes says he wants to protect wouldn't be sued – it would be their employers. And, in fact, there are almost no such lawsuits so far, despite over 1.6 million documented COVID-19 cases. Our first responders and front-line medical staff who are taking the risks deserve protections, but **this bill doesn't protect them** and instead blocks any accountability for giant corporations who decide to cut corners."

FCAN pointed out that the federal CARES Act already includes pandemic-related immunity for the healthcare sector and covers the front-line workers, and that Florida has passed many medical malpractice reforms to protect health professionals in these situations.

McGrath continued, "These workers are battling the virus every day and now are insulted by Brandes using them to try to get support for a bill that does nothing for them. Front-line workers and their patients should have protections as provided under current law."

FCAN opposes Sen. Brandes attempt to further expand liability immunity leaving Floridians at risk from *reckless or irresponsible actions* that cause illness or death from COVID-19.

McGrath continued, "Nursing homes especially have been hotbeds of COVID infections among the most vulnerable population, our elderly. **Why doesn't Brandes do something to protect them?"**

The Florida Consumer Action Network (FCAN) is a grassroots organization which empowers citizens to influence public policy by organizing and educating in areas where consumer voices are underrepresented. FCAN is an affiliate of the Public Interest Network and the Consumer Federation of America.

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