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October 16, 2024

The Honorable Rick Scott
United States Senate
502 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0001

RE: New OSHA “Heat Safety” Rules Need to Be Done the Right Way, and the Florida Chamber Safety Council is Here as a State and National Resource

Dear Senator Scott,

Getting America back to a sustained 3% national economic growth plan is a top priority, and OSHA’s new rule, which seeks to add additional regulations on America’s job creators, must be done right. I’m bringing this new proposal to your attention as it will impact many employers in your district and throughout Florida. The Florida Chamber Leadership Cabinet on Safety, Health & Sustainability, which is the Florida Chapter of the National Safety Council, leads our mission of making Florida the safest state in America.

We are writing to be a resource as businesses and constituents may contact your office regarding the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) proposed rule titled “Heat Injury and Illness Prevention in Outdoor and Indoor Work Settings” and to express initial concerns about the disparate impact the rule could potentially have in Florida. We believe that growing the economy and ensuring safety can go hand in hand, and we advocate for both.

The Leadership Cabinet, which houses our Safety Council, is composed of prominent national safety and health experts from companies across the nation, including Ed Foulke, Jr., former Head of OSHA, Partner at Fisher Phillips, and Florida Chamber Leadership Cabinet Advisory Board Member. Together, they provide businesses of all sizes with best practices, training, and other invaluable resources as a part of the mission.

In recognition of the growing concern around heat illness and to further support Florida-based businesses, their employees and their families, our Florida Chamber Safety Council's Heat Committee collaborated to launch a business-led online platform earlier this year. This platform provides comprehensive resources on heat stress prevention, not only for safety professionals but also for small and mid-size businesses that may not have a dedicated safety department. In these companies, roles like HR, operations, or compliance officers often step in to ensure workplace safety. Key tools and resources available through this platform include:

- [Heat Stress Prevention Comprehensive Toolkit](#) – Provides essential tools and resources tailored for businesses. These include guidelines, checklists, and templates aimed at mitigating heat-related risks in the workplace, ensuring comprehensive safety measures are implemented to protect employees from heat stress.
- [Custom Heat Safety Training Programs](#) – Training from safety experts designed to educate organizations on effectively managing heat-related risks. The programs offered are tailored to specific workplace environments and focus on preventative measures, recognizing early symptoms of workplace hazards including heat stress, and implementing appropriate responses to ensure workers' safety.
- [Tips from the State's Foremost Safety Experts](#) – Industry leaders and the nation's foremost safety experts have come together to provide valuable advice and guidance on workplace safety, including strategies for preventing heat-related illnesses.
- [Heat Safety Mobile App](#) –The mobile application is designed to enhance visitor safety by providing real-time alerts and information about heat-related risks. It offers users features such as weather forecasts, hydration reminders, and guidance on staying safe in hot weather conditions to ensure users remain safe and manage heat exposure effectively.
- [Real Time Weather Monitoring Application](#) – Provides up-to-date information on heat risks across the United States. It offers real-time monitoring of heat-related weather conditions, including heat advisories, warnings, and forecasts. The application allows employers and users to monitor heat trends and implement proactive measures to mitigate risks.
- [Continuing Education & Training Opportunities](#) – Provides a range of educational resources on workplace safety, with ongoing training programs designed to enhance knowledge and skills related to heat safety and other occupational health topics. The opportunities include, but are not limited to workshops, seminars, online courses, on-site training, and certifications aimed at ensuring continuous improvement in safety practices for workers and businesses statewide.

Find a One-Page Summary of Resources Attached for Your Office to Share with Interested Parties

In addition to launching a heat platform accessible to all local businesses in Florida, we are actively soliciting comprehensive feedback from Florida local business leaders and safety professionals to learn how OSHA's proposed rule may impact their business. Following comprehensive feedback from Florida's safety leaders, we will submit a unified response to OSHA, aimed at having the Sunshine State provide the national model for how to get this right and ensure that the new regulations support both economic growth and workplace safety. This rule could have a significant impact on Florida local businesses and our economy. According to data from 2023, temperatures above the OSHA initial trigger for the rule occurred 270 days during the year in Florida, with 167 days above the high heat threshold. Florida Chamber members want to keep employees safe while simultaneously growing our economy.

The Florida Chamber believes the safety expertise of our Leadership Cabinet, as well as the leadership of local businesses across the state in keeping employees safe, are an opportunity to shape the pending national regulations on heat safety and is committed to providing our expertise throughout the rulemaking process. We fully intend to submit formal comments in response to OSHA's proposed rule and its potential impact before the 120-day comment period closes on December 30, 2024. We will continue to provide further details on our findings and will provide a copy of our comments to your office.

In addition to the initiatives detailed in this letter, the Florida Chamber has taken a leading role in ensuring workplace heat safety through both legislative and regulatory action. Earlier this year, we successfully advocated for a consistent heat safety policy across the state through the passage of House Bill 433, eliminating the potential for conflicting and unsafe local regulations and ensuring clarity for businesses and employees after a local government proposed its own unworkable heat safety ordinance. A patchwork of different heat safety regulations at the local level would have created confusion, resulting in less safe workplaces, while OSHA was considering its own proposed rule.

We remain committed to prioritizing workplace safety and value the opportunity to share our efforts with you. Please consider us a valuable resource as businesses contact your office about the heat illness prevention rule. We look forward to future collaborations aimed at maintaining Florida's position as a national model for the rest of the nation to follow.

My best,



Mark Wilson
President and CEO
Florida Chamber of Commerce



Catherine R. Yeutter
President
Florida Chamber Leadership Cabinet on Safety, Health & Sustainability

CC: Keith Koenig, Chair, Florida Chamber of Commerce
John Trevathan, Chair, Florida Chamber Leadership Cabinet
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