



# Keeping Our COVID-19 Heroes Employed

Senator Marsha Blackburn (R-TN)

Businesses across the country are desperate for workers, and our nation is facing a critical supply chain shortage. In August 2021, the U.S. economy had a [shocking](#) 10.4 million open jobs. We [need](#) 80,000 truck drivers alone to fix the supply chain crisis.

As grocery store shelves sit empty, and communities struggle to recover, President Biden should be doing everything possible to encourage Americans to show up to work. Instead, it is the administration's plan to implement a vaccine mandate that would force millions of Americans out of work.

Throughout the pandemic, one group stood above the rest and walked into work every day to ensure America could survive the COVID-19 Pandemic. These “essential workers” included, but were not limited to, police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, physicians, nurses, border patrol agents, truckers, grocery store workers, pilots, flight attendants, and construction workers. Their efforts kept America running. Across the country, these individuals were honored as the heroes of their time. The Biden administration has all but forgotten the sacrifices these essential workers and their families made. Instead, President Biden's vaccine mandate treats these heroes as second-class citizens.

Several of the vaccines developed to combat COVID-19 have proved to be safe and effective. However, the decision to get vaccinated is a decision that should be kept between a patient and their doctor. The federal government has no business mandating vaccinations for individuals or forcing compliance on businesses. Biden's one-size-fits-all mandate is an infringement on individual freedoms. No American—especially not our nation's COVID-19 heroes—should face the ultimatum of a job versus being fired.

## **The Keeping our COVID-19 Heroes Employed Act Would:**

- Protect essential workers from being fired due to COVID vaccination requirements.
- Define “essential workers” to mean any individual the relevant state, tribe, or territory (1) deemed essential during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic or (2) otherwise exempted from the restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Nullify the Biden Administration's Executive Order 14043 Requiring Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccination for Federal Employees if those employees qualify as essential workers.
- Nullify the Biden administration's Executive Order 14042 Ensuring Adequate COVID Safety Protocols for Federal Contractors if those contractors qualify as essential workers.
- Preempt the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) from issuing regulations requiring employees to vaccinate if those employees qualify as essential workers.