

TO: Chair Thomas and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

RE: Memo of support for HB 447

DATE: October 29, 2025

FROM: Ohio Employment Lawyers Association, Protecting Ohio's Employees, Tri-County Independent Living Center, Linking Employment Abilities and Potential, Access Center for Independent Living, Center for Disability Empowerment, Southeastern Ohio Center for Independent Living, Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council, Independence Alliance, Services for Independent Living, Mid-Ohio Board for an Independent Living Environment, Ohio-National Association for Women and the Ohio AFL-CIO

We support HB 447, sponsored by Representative Stewart, as it is a long overdue inflationary adjustment to Ohio's non-economic damage caps. The caps for pain and suffering, psychological trauma, loss of consortium, and emotional distress have not been adjusted for inflation since 2005, when they were put into law.

This legislation updates the caps by taking the \$250,000 level set in 2005 to \$415,000, or an amount equal to 3 times the plaintiff's economic loss, up to \$580,000. It also ensures that the caps will be tied to inflation, so future adjustments will not have to wait another 20 years.

Every day, Ohioans are injured through sexual abuse, defective products, harassment in the workplace, and auto accidents, to just name a few types of cases where non-economic damages are often awarded—and where the non-economic impacts the victims suffer are often far greater than their economic losses. These victims deserve justice, and HB 447 would more fairly compensate them for the injuries they sustain.

We hope the committee will vote in favor of HB 447.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Fred Gittes, President, Protecting Ohio's Employees, 614-222-4735.