ILLINOIS SMALL BUSINESS BILL OF RIGHTS

Illinois is the fourth most regulated state in the US.[1] Many of these regulations provide necessary protections for consumers and the environment, but others do little more than restrict competition. Together, these regulations cause death by 282,040 cuts for small business owners and prospective entrepreneurs.

Increased regulatory burdens lead to fewer businesses opened,[2, 3] fewer jobs created,[2, 3, 4] and lost revenue for existing businesses.[4] Small businesses feel the impact of regulation most acutely.[2, 4] Red tape often creates barriers to entry that deter new small competitors.[2]

Every small business deserves a fair chance to grow and thrive.

> Our bill will establish a **Small Business Bill of Rights** to make state regulations and processes more **transparent, predictable, and manageable**. Our bill will, in part:
>
> - **Guarantee** small businesses the right to know the legal basis for enforcement actions, understand how to appeal, and be free from retaliation for doing so.
> - **Provide** small businesses 30 days to cure first-time mistakes without facing fines, except in cases of fraud, intentional misconduct, or immediate safety threats.
> - **Standardize** inspection and audit procedures and require agencies to publish licensing and permitting data, such as processing times, denial rates, and delays.
> - **Strengthen** rulemaking analysis by requiring agencies to estimate the time needed to comply with rules and their financial impact on small businesses.
> - **Require** the Business Assistance Office to receive complaints about state rules, agency actions, and licensing, and recommend corrective actions.

Our bill will **protect small businesses without compliance staff**:

- Small businesses lacking in-house compliance staff will have a chance to address honest mistakes without facing penalties.

Our bill will **make licensing, permitting, and inspections more predictable**:

- Transparent wait times and consistent inspection procedures help small business owners prepare and show lawmakers what they need to fix.

This bill will help small businesses fix honest mistakes, plan with confidence, and have a voice in the rulemaking process while preserving the consumer and environmental protections regulations exist to provide. Illinois policymakers should take every possible step to make state government easier for small businesses to navigate.