FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 7, 2024

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Illinois Coalition for Legal Reform Opposes Efforts to Allow Unchecked Forum Shopping

Forum shopping hurts businesses, creates a burden for courts, and tarnishes the state's civil justice system

CHICAGO – The Illinois Coalition for Legal Reform today joined a coalition of businesses, healthcare professionals, and their insurers in opposing efforts to allow unchecked forum shopping when filing lawsuits in Illinois. Forum shopping allows plaintiffs to transfer a case to a venue they believe will result in a more favorable outcome, even when there is no connection between the chosen venue and the litigation.

In the amicus brief, filed in *Piasa Aromory, LLC. v. Kwame Raoul* in the Supreme Court of Illinois, ICFLR opposes efforts to abandon forum non conveniens, the doctrine which allows a court to transfer a case to a different venue within the state for the convenience of parties. Typically, public and private factors and the availability of alterative courts are considerations for where a case is heard. This proposal contradicts that principal and would allow cases to be redirected to specific jurisdictions where trial lawyers expect more favorable outcomes.

ICFLR and the coalition argue that abandoning the doctrine of forum non conveniens and allowing a case to proceed in any Illinois county will invite plaintiffs' attorneys to select courts and name defendants purely for strategic reasons. Without the check of an intrastate forum non conveniens motion, plaintiffs' attorneys will increasingly file complaints in counties in which they expect a more favorable outcome – anticipating that its judges are more likely to grant their motions, its juries are more likely to find liability, or that the ultimate outcome will be a larger damage award.

This unrestrained forum shopping will take a toll not only on defendants and witnesses, but also unnecessarily burden local jurors and courts, fail to protect local interests in deciding local cases, and undermine the integrity of the civil justice system

"Illinois cannot afford another avenue for lawsuit abuse, and the proposal to abandon forum non conveniens is exactly that. Unchecked forum shopping would undermine job creation, burden our civil court system, and ultimately harm workers, consumers and local economies," said **Katie Reilly, Executive Director of the Illinois Coalition for Legal Reform**. "The only thing this proposal will achieve is creating a legal system that is less focused on fairness and integrity than it is on the interests of plaintiffs' attorneys."

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About the Illinois Coalition for Legal Reform
The Illinois Coalition for Legal Reform is a statewide association dedicated to combating abusive litigation and excessive jury verdicts by creating a fair, efficient, and predictable legal system for all Illinois citizens. We are a non-profit, non-partisan, member-supported coalition that is active in the legislature and the courts. Through legislative advocacy, education, and public relations, the ICFLR is fighting for a civil justice system that is fair to all litigants and conducive to job and economic growth.