## Support HB 1077: The Uniform Public Expression Protection Act Sponsors: Didech

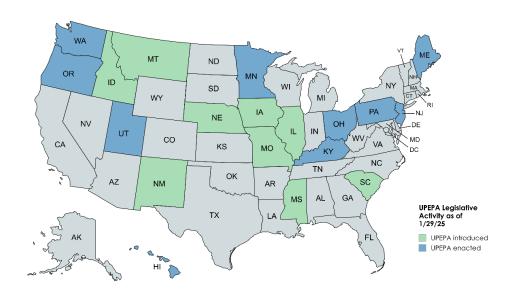
**PURPOSE:** The bill addresses the problem of "SLAPPs," or "strategic lawsuits against public participation." The goal of a SLAPP is not to win the lawsuit, but to bury the target in expensive litigation that punishes them for speaking out on an issue of public concern or for exercising First Amendment rights. This could be a parent who speaks out in a school board meeting or a citizen who protests a proposed development before the zoning board.

**CURRENT LAW:** Illinois's existing anti-SLAPP law is nearly 20 years old and is not working as intended. Reform is needed now to ensure that all First Amendment rights—freedom of speech, freedom of the press, the right to assemble or petition, and the right of association—are protected in Illinois.

**WHAT THE BILL DOES:** Creates a process for the efficient review and dismissal of SLAPPs by:

- Providing an early "off ramp" to dismiss lawsuits that infringe on First Amendment rights
- Requiring an expedited hearing and ruling from the judge
- Protecting conduct not protected under current Illinois anti-SLAPP law
- Saving the defendant time and money
- Conserving court resources

**ENACTED BY:** Hawaii, Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota, New Jersey, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, Washington



## **BILL SUPPORTERS**

American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois (ACLU of IL) Better Government Association (BGA) Freedom of the Press Foundation Illinois Press Association Uniform Law Commission