



Office of the Governor

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Nora Meyers Sackett,
Press Secretary, Office of the Governor
nora.sackett@state.nm.us

July 27, 2020

Gov. Lujan Grisham blasts Senate GOP for effort to slash benefits for workers hurt by COVID-19 pandemic

SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on Monday issued the following statement upon reports of the Republican plan to cut direct unemployment aid to workers by two-thirds in their latest proposal for a COVID-19 relief package:

“More than 175,000 New Mexicans have benefited from the \$600 boost throughout the pandemic. It’s a literal lifeline. Parents, workers, our neighbors and our friends all across our state have come to rely upon this to get by every day, every week of this crisis. Congressional Republicans want to take that money out of their pockets, water down essential benefits, provide even less to New Mexicans who need every ounce of assistance they can get during this public health and economic emergency. It represents an unconscionable step backward in our fight to both provide help to affected workers and to help sustain our economy. The proposal as it stands is unworkable and would lead to delays and confusion on behalf of the public, in addition to lacking any additional funding for states dealing with untold revenue losses. As a whole, the proposal falls short in any number of areas. This isn’t a partisan issue. This is about the provision of basic government services to meet the needs of constituents.

“We have known for months that the only tool available to us in battling the spread of COVID-19 is to keep physical distance from others and to remain home to the greatest extent possible. The only way this is possible for so many New Mexicans is to receive the benefits they need without endangering themselves and others by leaving the house. The state of New Mexico has effectively disseminated those unemployment funds -- almost \$1.5 billion total -- to thousands upon thousands of workers all across our state, and we will continue to execute the administration of essential benefits. But the federal government and Trump administration must do their part as well. They must not turn their backs on workers who need assistance now as much as they did in March, April, May and June. If our country has any hope of sustaining public health and economic

activity throughout this crisis, people very simply must have the resources they need to feed their families. Our state's Congressional delegation has fought hard for the continuation of these benefits for state residents. I will do everything I can to advocate with our delegation and other officials in Washington to deliver a restoration of these essential benefits for so many in our state."

Workforce Solutions Secretary Bill McCamley issued the following statement:

"People want to work safely, but that means beating COVID-19 first. We need to remember that our workers aren't the enemy. The virus is. Governor Lujan Grisham's data-based and steady approach to re-opening our economy is working, but our friends, neighbors and their children continue to need help with rent, utilities and food. Extended benefits have to continue and Congress needs to act fast to make sure that New Mexicans don't worry unnecessarily for their future."

IMPORTANT RESOURCES:

For more information about assistance from the state, visit newmexico.gov. More resources are also available at sharenm.org/nm-resources.

###