

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Senators Crystal Diamond and Cliff Pirtle urge Governor to Remove Vaccine Mandate for Children at State Fair

Senator Pirtle encourages families to attend Eastern NM State Fair in Roswell

SANTA FE – Following yesterday’s release of the vaccination Public Health Order, Senators Crystal Diamond and Cliff Pirtle today co-authored a letter to Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham requesting a removal of the vaccination mandate for children attending and participating in the 2021 New Mexico State Fair.

“While I can appreciate the pressure our Governor is under from administration officials, I feel this decision was careless and inconsiderate of the hard working FFA and 4H families who work all year long to show at the State Fair,” said **Senator Diamond** (District 35-Doña Ana, Hidalgo, Luna, and Sierra). “Yet again, evidence of the urban-rural divide is in full view. I hope the Governor will reconsider her vaccine mandate for children and not force parents to choose between making decisions they are uncomfortable with and watching their children’s hard work go to waste.”

“Families drive from every corner of our state to spend their time and money at the State Fair in Albuquerque,” added **Senator Pirtle** (District 32-Chaves, Eddy, and Otero). “This October, come to Roswell for the Eastern New Mexico State Fair and show your displeasure for this Governor and her mishandling of the pandemic. Bring your families to the *True* New Mexico State Fair to support a community that values freedom, hard work, and *True New Mexico* values.”

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New Mexico State Senate

STATE CAPITOL

Santa Fe 87501

August 18, 2021

The Honorable Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor of New Mexico
490 Old Santa Fe Trail, Suite 400
Santa Fe, NM 87501

The Honorable David R. Scrase, M.D.
Secretary-Designate, Department of Health
1190 S. St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87505

SENT VIA EMAIL TO caroline.buerkle@state.nm.us AND david.scrase@state.nm.us

Dear Governor Lujan Grisham and Secretary-Designate Scrase,

We are writing to urge you to remove the mandatory vaccination requirement for children attending and participating in the 2021 New Mexico State Fair.

According to the revised Public Health Order, dated August 17, 2021, "All persons who are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and enter the grounds of the New Mexico State Fair from September 9-19, 2021 must provide adequate proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to a State Fair official." This vaccination mandate would seemingly include minor children aged 12 years and older.

As you are aware, some of the premier events at the New Mexico State Fair are the annual youth competitions which draw young participants from across the state. Many of these children, including our 4-H and FFA students, are between 9 and 18 years old, and they have spent the greater part of this past year raising their animals and preparing their produce. While we understand the pressures you and other state officials are experiencing, we feel this decision was particularly careless and inconsiderate of the children and parents of our state. No family should be faced with the dilemma of receiving an experimental vaccine or having their hard work be completely lost.

We again urge you to remove this mandate for child vaccinations and allow all New Mexico children to participate in this year's fair.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this pressing matter.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Crystal R. Diamond in black ink.

CRYSTAL R. DIAMOND
State Senator

Handwritten signature of Cliff R. Pirtle in black ink.

CLIFF R. PIRTLE
State Senator