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Senators Gregg Schmedes and David Gallegos Respond to Governor's Latest COVID-19 Mandates

Concerns raised regarding the potential effect of mandated vaccinations for healthcare workers

SANTA FE – Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham today announced a renewing of the mandatory masking mandate for indoor settings, as well as mandatory vaccinations for all healthcare workers. **Senator Gregg Schmedes**, M.D. (District 19-Bernalillo, Sandoval, Santa Fe, and Torrance) and **Senator David Gallegos** (District 41-Eddy and Lea) released the following statements in response to the Governor's announcement:

"In the Governor's zealous pursuit to institute the most draconian approach to COVID-19 in the nation, she may be crushing healthcare access at the very time we need it most," said Senator Schmedes. "It has been reported that nearly one in three healthcare workers at our nation's largest hospitals are not vaccinated. Regardless of their reasons for being unvaccinated, this mandate tells our healthcare workers that the Governor thinks she is better than them at their own jobs. I do not know many in the healthcare field who will take kindly to this demand and I fear many who were already on the fence about staying in New Mexico will take this as an invitation to pack their bags."

"Rural New Mexico healthcare faces the triple threat of a looming influx of hospitalizations, a lack of access to providers, and now, an arbitrary vaccination deadline that may push our local healthcare systems into chaos," added Senator Gallegos. "The last thing we need is a forced shortage of healthcare workers and possible hospital closures due to a lack of staff. In an effort to solve a healthcare scare, the Governor may in fact be creating another healthcare crisis. A bed shortage is not as severe as a doctor, nurse, and hospital shortage."

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