



LYNN FINDLEY
SENATE DISTRICT 30

MARK OWENS
HOUSE DISTRICT 60

August 25, 2021

Governor Kate Brown
900 Court St. NE, Room 254
Salem, OR 97301

Honorable Governor Brown,

We strongly request you reverse course and remove the vaccination mandates placed on our health care and education sectors, and public and state employees. These mandates were announced without warning and without guidance, causing chaos, confusion and fear among our citizens. In addition, we request you begin an immediate process to allow robust medical and religious exemptions to honor the rights and freedoms of Oregonians to make the best medical decisions for themselves and their families. As a staunch advocate for the importance of personal medical choice in so many other healthcare areas, we know you understand and support this same philosophy.

The impacts these vaccination mandates will have on rural schools, health care providers and hospitals, prisons, public safety, social and public services, and other vaccine mandated sectors, will be severe. Thousands of hard-working Oregonians will be unfairly forced to choose between a medical procedure and the ability to provide for their families.

These mandates will result in more harm than good and will have an opposite effect than desired. Rural hospitals have already announced these mandates will result in significant staff loss and will be forced to shut their doors, further burdening an already-overwhelmed health care system. Public safety will be immediately at risk. Our firefighters, police, first responders and EMT sectors are all understaffed as is, and further losses will put our communities in harm's way.

In times of crisis such as this pandemic, it's more important than ever that the government and its citizens have a working relationship built on trust, transparency and accountability, and that individual rights and freedoms are honored. As we anticipate the inevitable and unfortunate rise in COVID cases, we must allow local public health authorities and local leaders to make decisions to create the most appropriate plan of action in their communities. We ask that you allow local branches of these sectors the authority to make decisions on how mandates are structured, communicated and if, how, and when they are implemented.

Since day one, we have joined you and our constituents in learning how to navigate this pandemic, shared information, advocated for our constituents to aggressively take action to slow the spread, wear masks, social distance, seek out the facts, abide by the laws, and obtain official information on the vaccine and how to get one if they so choose. We trust Oregonians to make smart decisions for themselves, their families, their neighbors, and their communities. We agree we need to do better, but mandated vaccines are not the answer.

We have included with this letter a series of questions sent to Oregon's Legislative Counsel regarding medical and religious exemptions and would request a conversation with you as soon as possible. We appreciate your immediate consideration, action, and response to these matters.

Sincerely,

Senator Lynn Findley
Senate District 30

Representative Mark Owens
House District 60