

# Government Has No Right to Mandate

New Mexico's government may be flirting with COVID-19 mandates again. Did you think government would just step aside when it became obvious it keeps doing pointless things?

I will not accept this "new normal" of endlessly recurring threats of mask mandates, shutdowns, and lockdowns. You do what you want, but I'm not going to accept going backward.

I hope businesses don't get targeted this time. I feel bad for business owners forced to choose between betraying their customers by enforcing the state's illegitimate mandates or risking punishment from the state.

Yes, an individual business owner has every right to require masks or even proof of vaccination, but I have the right to shop elsewhere. Which I will. I will not support those who help government violate people. The new Jim Crow era can't be allowed to stand.

I was more forgiving last year. Even though no one has the right to impose mask mandates or shutdowns, there were many unknowns in the beginning. But not now. At some point, the people have to say "I will not comply," whether it's as a customer or as a business owner.

Government is not your boss, you are its boss — if you choose to employ it. Recent history has shown government doesn't accept this situation, but that's just how it is.

If enough people simply refuse to comply, government has to back down. It's how the worst aspects of alcohol prohibition came to an end in 1933 — there simply wasn't enough compliance, and even juries refused to convict scofflaws. In the case of mask mandates and shutdowns, there isn't a constitutional amendment nor even legislation, backing it up. You aren't in the wrong if you refuse to comply.

I don't care if you want to wear a mask. I do care if you force others — even children — to do so. I don't care if you accept an experimental vaccine, which doesn't prevent the illness and doesn't prevent the vaccinated from spreading the illness. I do care if you demand others take the needle.

I understand the vaccine may make the symptoms less severe, which might reduce the risk of complications and hospitalization. However, I also understand no one can have the right or the imaginary political authority to force this vaccine — if it can honestly be called a vaccine — on others.

The mandates will end for good when enough people say "No, I won't."