



Sent via email to diego.arencon@state.nm.us and kathy.kunkel@state.nm.us.

March 26, 2020



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



The Honorable Kathy Kunkel
Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Department of Health
1190 S. St. Francis Drive, N4100
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Dear Governor Lujan Grisham and Secretary Kunkel,

As our state comes together to battle the threat of COVID-19, New Mexicans are rising to the challenge of social distancing and serving our vulnerable populations. We are all aware of the importance of donating protective equipment to medical personnel and we are responding to the call to lessen demands on our health care system for equipment and services needed by those who are ill or at increased risk. Nationally, this number is already high, and a rapid surge locally is possible. Therefore, we are again heeding calls and directives to come to the aid of others in this urgent and challenging situation.

Unfortunately, there is one clear outlier in this effort, both locally and nationally—the abortion industry. In acts of self-interested fearmongering, the abortion industry is now exploiting the anxiety of women and families by continuing to promote elective abortions in communities across our state. These abortions include surgical and medical procedures, some carried out through full-term pregnancies.

The abortion industry in New Mexico, led by industry magnate Planned Parenthood, is uniquely positioned to change course and free up personnel and equipment to combat COVID-19. By halting both surgical and chemical abortions, the demand placed on emergency rooms due to abortion complications would decrease. This would also protect women who will, without doubt, need follow-up care, including infection treatment and transfusions from our emergency rooms and hospitals.

The abortion industry's continued operation is depleting sorely needed equipment and creating complications that will further overwhelm our already overextended emergency rooms. At a time when hospitals are overloaded, the abortion industry continues to put women at risk of incomplete abortions, hemorrhaging, and infections. Women undergoing chemical abortions are especially vulnerable, experiencing four times as many adverse events as women undergoing surgical



abortions. As many as five to seven percent of all women obtaining chemical abortions will require surgical procedures, and three percent could end up in the emergency room.

These facts beg these questions—while your administration is in a race to “save lives,” why are you are allowing New Mexico’s abortion industry to continue to take the lives of innocent preborn children? While surgery centers and medical professionals postpone elective and diagnostic procedures at your directive, why are abortion centers allowed to churn out elective surgical and chemical abortions on demand? And while you demand that New Mexicans stay at home and avoid travel to curb the spread of COVID-19, why are you allowing women from all over the country and even the world to come to New Mexico to obtain abortions, putting us at greater risk for transmission across state lines?

The abortion industry is compounding one crisis with another. Therefore, we urge you to use your broad emergency powers to safeguard against their extreme abortion agenda by:

1. Ensuring that emergency response funds are not diverted to the abortion industry;
2. Following the example of other states by requiring the abortion industry to cease operations and join healthcare providers in donating their PPE and equipment to COVID-19 response; and
3. Promoting medically accurate and supportive information for women that corrects the inaccurate and exploitative messaging coming from an industry all too happy to use this pandemic to scare women and families into obtaining abortions.

As New Mexicans, we are united in a spirit of mutual concern, hope, and solidarity to forge through this crisis and save every threatened human life. We write in full support of these measures and pray for you, our legislators, our heroic health care personnel and essential service workers, and our fellow New Mexicans as we work together to “flatten the curve” and save lives.

Sincerely,

Ethel Maharg
Executive Director
Right to Life Committee of New Mexico

Vince Torres
Executive Director
Family Policy Alliance of New Mexico

Elisa Martinez
Executive Director
New Mexico Alliance for Life