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I do not agree with moving forward with the proposed amendments to 20.2.91 NMAC

Rural New Mexicans are against mandate of electric vehicles without proper infrastructure

Rural areas of New Mexico have been facing critical challenges related to basic infrastructure for many years. The lack of running water, sewer systems, and educational resources has been a pressing concern. In addition, the recent push towards mandating electric vehicles (EVs) without proper infrastructure has further widened the divide between rural and urban communities.

The rural communities of New Mexico have long struggled with inadequate infrastructure and limited resources. While the world is moving towards a greener future with the adoption of electric vehicles, it is essential to consider the unique challenges faced by rural New Mexicans.

Lack of basic infrastructure

Basic necessities such as running water and sewer systems are still inaccessible to many rural households in New Mexico. Without a reliable water supply or proper sanitation, these communities face numerous health and safety risks. Allocating resources to address these fundamental needs should be a priority before enforcing mandates on electric vehicles.

Impact of COVID-19 on education

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the educational disparities between rural and urban areas. Lack of internet access and technological resources has resulted in students in rural New Mexico missing out on valuable education for two years. Prioritizing educational infrastructure, including internet connectivity, should take precedence over mandating electric vehicles in these communities.

Need for investment in electric infrastructure

While the idea of transitioning to electric vehicles is commendable, the infrastructure required to support them is currently inadequate in rural New Mexico. Charging stations are few and far between, making it impractical for residents to rely on electric vehicles as their primary mode of transportation. Investment in building a robust electric infrastructure should be a priority before mandating EVs.

Disparity in access to electric vehicles

Mandating electric vehicles without addressing the economic disparities that exist between rural and urban communities could further marginalize rural New Mexicans. Many residents cannot afford electric vehicles due to their high upfront costs, leaving them with limited mobility options. It is crucial to ensure equal access and affordability before enforcing such mandates.

Challenges faced by rural New Mexicans

Rural New Mexicans face unique challenges due to their geographic isolation and limited resources. The absence of proper infrastructure compounds these challenges, leaving them at a disadvantage. Mandating electric vehicles without considering these hurdles will only widen the gap between rural and urban communities.

Economic implications of mandating electric vehicles

Forcing electric vehicle mandates without providing the necessary infrastructure would disproportionately affect rural communities financially. The cost of developing and maintaining electric infrastructure would fall on the residents, who are already struggling with limited resources. It is

unreasonable to burden rural New Mexicans with additional financial responsibilities without proper support.

#### Importance of proper infrastructure

Before implementing mandates on electric vehicles, it is imperative to address the existing infrastructure gaps. Focusing on essential needs such as clean water, sanitation, and education would improve the overall quality of life for rural New Mexicans. Only then should the focus shift towards the adoption of electric vehicles.

#### Addressing the concerns of rural communities

To ensure fairness and inclusivity, the concerns of rural communities regarding electric vehicle mandates must be heard. Engaging in meaningful dialogue with residents, local leaders, and community organizations can provide insights into their unique challenges and perspectives. Their input should be taken into account while formulating decisions that affect their lives.

#### Finding sustainable solutions

Rather than imposing mandates without considering the specific needs of rural New Mexicans, a comprehensive approach is required. This includes investing in infrastructure development, incentivizing the adoption of electric vehicles, and supporting rural communities in their transition towards sustainable practices. Collaboration between government, private sector entities, and local communities is essential to finding viable solutions.

#### The role of government and private sector

The government, in partnership with the private sector, plays a crucial role in addressing infrastructure gaps in rural areas. Public-private collaborations can facilitate the development of electric infrastructure and ensure it is accessible to all residents. By working together and investing in rural communities, the government and private sector can alleviate the burdens faced by rural New Mexicans.

#### Conclusion

While the push towards electric vehicles and sustainability is commendable, rural New Mexicans deserve equitable access to basic infrastructure first. Overlaying mandates without addressing fundamental needs will only perpetuate the divide between rural and urban communities.

Prioritizing infrastructure development, listening to the concerns of rural residents, and finding sustainable solutions are essential for a fair and inclusive transition to electric vehicles.

#### FAQs

1. Will mandating electric vehicles impact the affordability of transportation for rural New Mexicans? Electric vehicles are currently more expensive than traditional vehicles, making them less accessible to rural communities. Implementing mandates without considering affordability may negatively impact transportation options for rural New Mexicans.

2. Why is access to running water and sewer systems important before focusing on electric vehicles?

Access to basic necessities like running water and sanitation is crucial for the health and well-being of rural communities. Prioritizing these needs is essential before transitioning to mandates on electric vehicles.

3. How can the government and private sector collaborate to address the infrastructure gaps in rural areas?

The government and private sector can collaborate by investing in the development of electric infrastructure and providing resources to address other infrastructure gaps in rural areas. By working together, they can ensure equitable access to essential services.

4. What can be done to bridge the educational gap in rural communities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?

Initiatives such as expanding internet connectivity and providing educational resources can help bridge the educational gap in rural communities. Investment in technology and tailored solutions is necessary to support remote learning in rural areas.

5. How will focusing on infrastructure before implementing electric vehicle mandates benefit rural communities economically?

Prioritizing infrastructure development will lead to job creation and stimulate economic growth in rural communities. This, in turn, can alleviate financial burdens faced by rural New Mexicans and improve their overall well-being.