

Daniel C. Higbie

I am a life-long hard-working New Mexican and a small business owner with 90 employees, an Albuquerque business that has won the NM Top Workplaces (employee voted upon!) more than 8 times. I honestly had to read and re-read the proposed Heat Rule guidelines probably 5 times just to make sure my eyes were seeing it truly.

1. For heavy labor in full sun and temperatures exceeding 90°F, breaks must be taken every 20 minutes for at least 40 minutes.

If this guideline were actually be put into practice, employees on a normal 6 hour shift would actually work a total of 2 hours, but get paid for 6, with 4 hours to... just sit and smoke? Recover because they are so frail and weak that they cannot stand for longer than 20 minutes?

This is beyond ridiculous... and then I understood - this ruling isn't really about any sort of Heat protection at all for New Mexicans, but just another way to add a large tax on already stressed small businesses, while reducing the actual work being done to ludicrously low levels.

Truthfully, this bill WILL bankrupt more small businesses than Covid did, by making them pay for work not being done, and it tells me that the New Mexico legislature truly wants to remove any small businesses run by good New Mexicans, perhaps to replace them with large national corporate businesses?

It also shows that there are legislators who don't really respect the value of hard work and the inherent dignity that it gives to all people - the knowledge that you worked hard and were a true contribution to your organization, and you earned every dollar that you received. Perhaps those making this ruling are so removed from any semblance of real sustained work that they have forgotten this. It certainly projects that New Mexicans are physically weak in every way, and need to be protected from any sustained activity, perhaps because they cannot handle it.

Well I know New Mexicans to be strong, capable, hearty people who don't need to be coddled, who love to work with purpose, and who love to accomplish great things together, even if they are hard.

Honestly, if the true underlying goal of our legislators is to give away money to needy people, at least be transparent about it and not underhanded, and just do a General Basic Income program for those that apply, funded by the massive Oil and Gas surplus that we have.

Sincerely,

Daniel C. Higbie