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I support the inclusion of best practices and science-based solutions in the New Mexico Environment Department's (NMED) draft heat protection rule to keep workers safe from heat exposure in the workplace, but the standard should also address these areas:

- The standard needs more clarity on emergency procedures. In cases of heat stroke and other severe heat-related illnesses every second counts and so employers and workers alike must be well versed on what actions to take as they wait for emergency medical staff to arrive.
- The standard has only a few reasonable exemptions for specific workplaces, but it needs to clarify that buildings and vehicles with mechanical cooling controls are exempt only when those systems are functioning. Many of the complaints the NMED investigated between 2022-2025 found broken air conditioning for weeks, months, and in one case a year. Further, delivery workers should not be exempted if the cabs of their trucks have air conditioning, but they spend more than 15 minutes out of an hour either in the back of the truck or in the act of delivering packages to doorsteps.
- The NMED should strengthen the HIIPP provisions by urging employers to seek input and involvement of non-managerial staff in drafting the plans. Frontline workers who perform work tasks daily are best placed to understand the specific dangers of the workplace, adding crucial knowledge to the HIIPP.
- The standard should specify that training must be given in person with the opportunity to ask questions and employers should be required to re-deliver the training in the case of a serious heat-related illness or injury onsite, an OSHA citation, a fatality, or following significant changes in work processes.
- The standard should require employers to include references to existing New Mexico non-retaliation laws in employer HIIPP plans and worker training. It is important to educate and encourage workers to report perceived HIIPP violations and to protect them from retaliation when they do so.