

OPINION: Progressive Rhetoric Can't Hide Legislative Inaction

By: Representative Gail Armstrong, House Republican Leader (R-Magdalena)

Not surprisingly, New Mexico's progressive Democrat lawmakers have been giving themselves credit for "protecting New Mexico's families" after the recent special session. But this political spin should not fool New Mexicans – the session was nothing more than political theater. It was Act II of the Democrats' months-long effort to spread fear that President Trump would destroy healthcare and take food assistance from hundreds of thousands of New Mexicans.

Since President Trump signed the federal budget reconciliation bill (H.R. 1), all we've heard from progressive lawmakers are talking points that simply aren't true. The results of the special session prove it. Despite their "sky is falling" rhetoric, the five bills Democrats rushed through failed to address the issues they claimed to care about.

For example, the Democrat-led Legislature did nothing to address changes to Medicaid. The only major action they took for SNAP recipients was to use state taxpayer dollars to continue benefits for people who will lose eligibility because they are not U.S. citizens.

The one healthcare item Democrats did address had nothing to do with President Trump. They sought to extend federal premium tax credits that were already scheduled to expire in December 2025 – an expiration set by a Democrat-controlled Congress and signed into law by President Biden.

What this special session should be remembered for is not what lawmakers did, but what they refused to do. If progressive Democrats truly wanted to "protect New Mexico's families," why did they ignore our state's healthcare crisis and the shortage of providers? Why did they fail to address the homelessness epidemic plaguing Albuquerque and Santa Fe? Why did they refuse to tackle our revolving-door criminal justice system that has made Albuquerque one of the most dangerous cities in America? And why did they continue to ignore CYFD's repeated failures to protect abused and neglected children?

Republican House members came prepared with solutions to these problems, but the Speaker refused to allow our bills to even be introduced for debate.

In reality, the Democrats used the special session to posture politically and cater to special interest groups – not to solve the urgent problems every New Mexican sees in their own community. To the Governor and Democrat lawmakers, funding for public television mattered more than tackling violent juvenile crime and protecting vulnerable children from abuse and neglect.

This special session should serve as a wake-up call. It exposed who is really running our state and why New Mexico's most serious challenges remain unaddressed. Progressive Democrats would rather blame President Trump than take responsibility for decades of failed, out-of-touch policies.

As the tax committee chair admitted on the House floor: "In New Mexico, until things change, the Democrats are the majority in the House and the Senate." He's right. Democrats have

controlled this state for more than 90 years and are responsible for the crises we face today – a failing education system, a violent crime epidemic, an exodus of healthcare providers, and a child welfare system that continues to fail our most vulnerable.

Until there is a change in the Progressive Democrat controlled legislature, New Mexicans cannot and should not expect things to get any better.

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