



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on November 18, 2021

Florida Legislature Votes to Block Biden Vaccine Mandates in Special Session

Florida's House and Senate passed a [package of bills](#) on Wednesday that will prevent private-sector workers from being required to get vaccinated against COVID-19 if they provide medical reasons or religious reasons or could demonstrate natural immunity to the virus. Individuals may also opt out of any vaccine requirements if they agree to regular COVID testing and wear personal protective equipment.

Other notable measures in the package bar government agencies from mandating vaccines and reinforce the state's "Parents Bill of Rights" law that bans student mask and vaccine requirements in public schools. One measure includes steps to withdraw OSHA and create a new, Florida-only workplace safety agency. Another measure shields employees who complain about a company's vaccine policies, the *Herald-Tribune* reported.

"We trust the individual Floridians to make the best decision for themselves and their children, more than we trust the federal government," said State Representative Joe Harding (R-Williston), just before the House voted 78-39 in favor of the package. Just one Democrat — Representative James Bush (D-Miami) — voted for the plan, Fox 13 reported.

Hours after the House vote, the Florida Senate approved the measure 24-14 along party lines.

The votes came on the third day of a special legislative session called by Governor Ron DeSantis to counter Biden's OSHA mandate and requirements for federal contractors and healthcare workers to be vaccinated.

But House Democrats claim the session was motivated by DeSantis' presidential ambitions, Fox 13 reported.

"The circus has folded up its tents and is going back home," House Minority Co-leader Evan Jenne (D-Dania Beach) said. "The special session on promoting a presidential campaign is over. But the damage to public health will last for a generation and lead to untold death and suffering."

Jenne's cynicism ignores the fact that DeSantis and Florida Republicans have long been leading the charge against Biden's overreach. Florida is one of more than two dozen states that filed federal court challenges to the OSHA rule aimed at approximately 80 million workers in the private sector.

State Representative Cord Byrd (R-Neptune Beach) countered claims by the Democrats, asserting the



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votes were about medical freedom.

“Today we’re doing something to protect people’s rights,” said Byrd. “We are a Legislature and governor who believe in individual rights, including liberty. It’s not a charade. It’s not a stunt.”

The OSHA rule is currently on hold after an order by the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, the agency announced on Wednesday.

“While OSHA remains confident in its authority to protect workers in emergencies, OSHA has suspended activities related to the implementation and enforcement of the (rule) pending future developments in the litigation,” the agency’s website said Wednesday.

OSHA’s confidence may be overblown. Just one day after the agency issued its Emergency Temporary Standard ordering businesses with more than 100 employees to get vaccinated or submit to weekly tests, the Fifth Circuit shut it down, citing “cause to believe there were grave statutory and constitutional issues with the Mandate.” The court reaffirmed its stay order against OSHA again on November 12.

Judge Kurt Englehardt observed in his [decision](#) that OSHA’s 50-year history has created just 10 ETSs, six of which were challenged in court and only one of which survived.

Judge Englehardt questioned not only the constitutionality of the mandate, but called the constitutionality of OSHA’s very existence into question. He noted that OSHA was never intended to “authorize a workplace safety administration in the deep recesses of the federal bureaucracy to make sweeping pronouncements on matters of public health affecting every member of society in the profoundest of ways.”

It is widely assumed the fate of the OSHA rule will likely be decided by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In the meantime, Florida Republicans assert Wednesday’s votes will protect Floridians from losing their jobs because of Biden’s mandates.

“It’s just mind-blowing most days to think that it is an acceptable position to hold that another person would get to make the health care decision of whether or not to be vaccinated, that an employer would be able to make a health care decision for their employee,” House bill co-sponsor Erin Grall, (R-Vero Beach) said.

And while Florida Democrats such as State Representative Kelly Skidmore (D-Boca Raton) claim that the move by Republicans is merely showing agreement with “a loud minority that vaccines are bad,” Republican House Speaker Chris Sprowls (R-Palm Harbor) asserts, “You can be for a vaccine, and for the opportunity for people to get a vaccine, and still not support a massive government-forced vaccination.”

Furthermore, Skidmore’s assertions prove once more that the Democrats understand little about what the Founding Fathers intended for the United States of America. The creation of a constitutional republic rather than a democracy was intentional to [protect the minority](#) from majority rule. Even if just one person in all the United States was opposed to the vaccine mandate, the law should be protecting that one individual from being forced to do something against his or her will by the majority.

This is particularly important when it comes to medical freedom. Medical history in the United States is plagued by dangerous [medications](#), [foods](#), and [devices](#) initially deemed “safe” by the Food and Drug Administration that have later been proved to be quite harmful, even deadly.



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Sadly, the COVID vaccines are not exempt from that. A quick perusal of the [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System](#) proves that. And because VAERS relies on self-reporting, it should be assumed that all of these figures are in reality higher than what's being reported.

The Florida package now awaits Governor DeSantis' signature before it becomes official.





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