

NEW JERSEY LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 40

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Commissioner Judith M. Persichilli
New Jersey Department of Health
P. O. Box 360
Trenton, NJ 08625-0360

Dear Commissioner Persichilli:

I am writing to express my dismay over the recent push of Department of Health sponsored COVID vaccine commercials geared toward young audiences. One such commercial features children asking Santa for COVID shots. Many constituents have stopped me over the holidays and expressed their concerns.

When I first saw these ads, I was stunned. Targeting young kids with politically charged messaging on children-centric media outlets is quite simply the lowest form of pandering.

I am requesting a full accounting the of funds expended on COVID-19 vaccine commercials and advertisements including television and radio ads. I would like a detailed report on the total amount of funds expended and how much additional money is budgeted for future advertisements.

Where are we getting the money? Were state taxpayer dollars expended, or did we burn valuable federal funds on this gimmick? Were other services not provided as a result of this misdirection of funds?

Further, who was responsible for this decision? Was this made alone or with input from the administration? Was an outside consultant hired to film the commercials and write the script?

The commercials may well have created more anxiety and fear of the virus in a vulnerable segment of the population that has been victimized by well-documented psychological issues related to the pandemic. Perhaps a better use of these monies would go toward supporting children's mental health services.

Additionally, as you are aware, residents of New Jersey were recently unable to obtain COVID tests. Why were funds expended on television and radio commercials and not prioritized for tests?

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristin M. Corrado".

Senator Kristin M. Corrado