

If Truckers Like Me Won't Comply, Biden's Vaccine Mandate Could Tank The Economy

Forcing all truck drivers to take injections against COVID-19 poses significant challenges to an already struggling U.S. transportation industry, on which the nation's commerce depends.

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If President Biden gets his way, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) will require truck drivers, along with the overwhelming majority of American employees, to get COVID-19 injections or face stiff penalties. Truck drivers and their employers are already saddled with burdensome regulations via the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). This new Biden regulation further intruding into drivers' private medical affairs could make finding qualified truckers increasingly difficult, especially for small trucking companies.

At present, all commercially licensed big-rig drivers are required to submit to a physical medical exam every two years. If that exam finds a driver to be, say, pre-diabetic or pre-hypertensive, he must be prescribed medication from his doctor for the problem and present that to an official examiner in order to be cleared to drive. Then he must be reexamined every year instead of every other year.

Certain failures to meet the standards in the exam can disqualify drivers and cut their careers short. The Department of Transportation (DOT) physical

not only requires testing by urine sample for diabetes and a blood pressure examination, but it is also a comprehensive physical including tests for vision, hearing, cardiovascular health, and (a favorite of the men), a hernia examination.

Why Truckers Might Say, 'Jump Off a Bridge'

Adding a COVID shot (and potentially boosters) to these already invasive DOT physical requirements might make truckers balk for several reasons. For one, a good deal of young men aged 21 to 30 are in a low-risk group for complications from a COVID infection, and the Centers for Disease Control [acknowledges](#) data showing such younger vaccine recipients can later experience dangerous heart inflammation. Young truckers may make the calculation that risking an adverse side effect like this, although rare, is not worth the chance.

Other drivers might have religious or moral objections to how the vaccine was developed. Still others might simply be sick and tired of having Uncle Sam telling them what to do in virtually every area of their life and flat-out refuse for this reason alone.

Biden's mandate in its current form also does not take into account those who have natural immunity from a previous COVID-19 infection. Some might see a vaccine as unnecessary because they have such natural immunity.

It is my considered opinion as a truck driver that this latest regulatory overreach may become a bane to small trucking companies at best and strangle the economy due to a severe lack of drivers at worst. I have acquired natural immunity, have ethical concerns about the vaccine, and, quite frankly, already despise complying with nonsensical regulations like this one and many others. If truckers like me decide to refuse this order,

several possibilities are in play.

Employment Margins Are Already Very Tight

One possibility is that many of the smaller trucking companies (outfits running 1,000 or fewer trucks) will simply not be able to stay in business. Like many businesses, trucking runs on very tight margins. When trucks and trailers sit around not making revenue for the company because no one is available to drive them, trucking companies can quickly go out of business.

I currently work on perhaps the most important account my small transportation firm has. About ten of us service the local transport of goods for this account. If we all decided to strike when and if this vaccine mandate isn't blocked by the courts, it is fairly likely the company would lose the account. This doesn't only affect my company.

Even if our trucking outfit decides not to comply, what would happen to the manufacturers to which we deliver our goods that do? If our consignees decide they won't let any truckers in who can't produce proof of vaccination, our shipping client still might be forced to pull the account. That might be another death knell for this small trucking business. It stands to reason that other small businesses, which are already struggling to find qualified employees, could easily be facing the same fate.

As the small and mid-size transportation outfits struggle for drivers and eventually are forced to close, the already rising prices for goods are set to spike even further. Transportation logistics are quite complicated and delicate. A disruption in labor availability is a major shock to supply lines.

Also, what happens if a shipper asks for proof of vaccine or for the driver to submit to a test and he refuses? Or the driver works for a company with fewer than 100 employees? The complications affecting the transportation

industry are legion because of the business cuts across so many other aspects of American commerce.

For example, our ten-man operation struggles to maintain quotas when just one man is out for an illness. Even vacation time can be disruptive if not properly planned. Now imagine my manager's frustration if a man arrives at a consignee to deliver his goods, tests positive for COVID, and the shipment is refused.

Obviously these two factors alone—lack of drivers and cooperation across the actors involved in supply chain fulfillment—would result in further shortages of materials arriving on time at manufacturers. That would mean manufacturers can't process a certain consumer good (like groceries) and goods don't appear on the shelves as frequently or in the same quantity. That causes a scarcity, and the prices soar. Scale that to the size of the U.S. economy, and it's easy to see why Biden's mandate is a really poor idea, even outside all its legal problems.

Is It Right to Force People to Take Medicines?

Additionally, what are the feds going to do if I refuse to get the vaccine but keep working? They plan to fine my company nearly \$14,000 per violation. What will they do if the CEO decides not to pay the fines and keeps running the company as normal? Will federal agents arrest the CEO and all the office employees? What if they resist?

That's an extreme and unlikely example, of course, but the point is, *all* laws and regulations are ultimately enforced at the point of a gun. I am convinced that the ruling class and a good chunk of the populace too easily forget what the ultimate enforcement of government regulation entails at the end of the day. Are vaccine mandates worth sending in enforcement officers to punish

people for not obeying, or to force them into medical treatments against their wills?

President Biden and his party pay lip service to caring about the working class, but at every opportunity they can, they place more and more burdens on workers. This is *precisely* the reason most of us blue-collar, middle-class workers have taken to voting the way we do.

In a 2016 lecture at Hillsdale College entitled, "[Conservative Civil Disobedience](#)," sociologist Charles Murray postulated that at some point, in order to stop being tyrannized by the regulatory state, workers and employers will need to refuse to comply, get arrested or fined for it, and take it to court. I've only got one question now, as someone who is deciding whether Biden's vaccine mandate is a hill worth dying on: Is there a lawyer in the house?

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