

11 States File Suit Against Biden's Business Vaccine Mandate

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JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Attorneys general in 11 states filed suit Friday against President Joe Biden's administration, challenging a new vaccine requirement for workers at companies with more than 100 employees.

The lawsuit filed in the St. Louis-based 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals argues that the authority to compel vaccinations rests with the states, not the federal government.

"This mandate is unconstitutional, unlawful, and unwise," said the court filing by Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt, one of several Republicans vying for the state's open U.S. Senate seat next year.

New regulations by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration mandate that companies with more than 100 employees require their workers to be vaccinated against COVID-19 or be tested for the virus weekly and wear masks on the job. The requirement is to kick in Jan. 4. Failure to comply could result in penalties of nearly \$14,000 per violation.

Schmitt said Missouri has 3,443 private employers who could be covered by the vaccine requirement, with nearly 1.3 million employees.

He said he sued "to protect personal freedoms, preserve Missouri businesses, and push back on bureaucratic tyrants who simply want power and control."

The Biden administration has been encouraging widespread vaccinations as the quickest way out of the pandemic. A White House spokeswoman said Thursday that the mandate was intended to halt the spread of a disease that has claimed more than 750,000 lives in the U.S.

Missouri was joined in the lawsuit by the Republican attorneys general of Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming. The office of Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller, a Democrat, also joined in the suit, along with several private, nonprofit and religious employers.

The Daily Wire, a conservative media company, filed a challenge in federal court on Thursday. So did companies in Michigan and Ohio represented by a conservative advocacy law firm, as well as two Wisconsin manufacturers represented by a conservative law firm.

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