

Biden slams 'minority' preventing US from overcoming COVID

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President Joe Biden on Thursday blamed vaccine hesitant Americans for preventing the United States from overcoming the COVID pandemic.

"A distinct minority of Americans supported by a distinct minority of elected officials are keeping us from turning the corner," he said in a televised White House address during which he announced a new vaccination plan affecting some 100 million people.

"The unvaccinated overcrowd our hospitals, are overrunning emergency rooms and intensive care units, leaving no room for someone with a [heart attack](#) or pancreatitis or cancer," he added, of the 80 million eligible Americans who have refused COVID shots.

The biggest plank of the plan will involve requiring [private companies](#) employing more than 100 people to ensure all workers are vaccinated or tested weekly—a measure that will impact an estimated 80 million people.

"This is not about freedom, or [personal choice](#), it's

about protecting yourself and those around you, people you work with, people you care about the people you love," Biden said.

He noted that many large companies and even Fox News, which is highly critical of his administration, had already announced similar moves.

"The bottom line: We're going to protect vaccinated workers from unvaccinated co-workers. We're going to reduce the spread of COVID-19 by increasing the share of the workforce that is vaccinated in businesses all across America," he said.

Republican lawmakers said the administration was overstepping its authority with the requirement, which it plans to enforce through an emergency rule to be developed by the Department of Labor.

"Sounds a lot like a dictatorship," House Republicans tweeted on their official account.

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