



Chairman's Letter May 2023

April 28th, Associated Press: "A small New Mexico town near Albuquerque adopted an ordinance Wednesday aimed at blocking the distribution of abortion medication or supplies by mail, extending a wave of local government restrictions on abortion."

The Santa Fe County Town of Edgewood approved the ordinance by a 4-1 vote. Mayor Audrey Jaramillo was joined by Commissioners Sterling Donner, Ken Brennan and Jerry Powers in stating that Edgewood will abide by the federal Comstock rule prohibiting interstate commerce in abortion drugs.

Much respect to Edgewood for standing up and pushing back on HB7 and an out-of-control state government. Two other counties and three towns have passed similar ordinances in New Mexico, and 66 nationwide, because local communities have the right to make their own rules. In many ways, we in New Mexico are faced with a central state government that has become aloof, and out of touch with the people.

Today is Cinco de Mayo, the day when Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza defeated the French in the 1862 Battle of Puebla. But before he became a Mexican National Hero, Zaragoza actually fought against the government of Mexico. He was born in Goliad, in what was then the Mexican province of Texas. The house where Zaragoza was born is now a museum. The story it tells is of a province fighting against the central government of Santa Anna, who controlled them from far away in Mexico City. A dictator in a distant capital.

This age-old battle between the central government and the far-flung provinces plays out over and over again in history. One year ago, the US Supreme Court ruled on the Dobbs decision, a state's rights issue, and sent the crafting of abortion laws back to the states to determine. This state vs federal power dynamic is mirrored at the local vs state level. Cities and towns assert their sovereignty over edicts from the state powers above.

Much like Zaragoza's fight against Santa Anna, we are fighting for control of our lives against a centralized power in the form of state and also federal government. So on this Cinco de Mayo, let's raise a glass to the Town of Edgewood, New Mexico, for asserting our freedoms and right to self-determination.

Robert Witsenhausen, RPSFC Chair