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Statement from Mayor Alan Webber on Divisive Ad In Santa Fe Reporter

Here's something we should all agree on: We need more unity and less division in our country and our community. We need more understanding and less anger. We need more calm discussion and less loud shouting. We need to lower the temperature. Across the country, hate crimes are on the rise. There's an increase in anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination of all kinds. These attacks have one thing in common: **They seek to divide us.**

It's here in Santa Fe, too. I know because last week Union Protectiva, a long-standing Santa Fe organization, paid for an ad in the Santa Fe Reporter that attacked me personally with a series of slurs and misrepresentations.

Their attack ad against me said that I:

- "Discounted the attacks on our religion."
- "Established the Marxist 'Cultural, History, Art, Reconciliation' (CHART) process."
- Was an "outsider" in Santa Fe.
- "Attempted privatization of City service."
- Support "the removal of the Gilbert [sic] Guzman MultiCultural mural on Guadalupe Street just to please 'rich outsiders.'"

These charges are wrong. The facts are wrong. Even worse, their intention is wrong: Their purpose is to inflame divisions in our city.

It's disturbing. But there's more.

Last week I was shown an anti-Semitic cartoon of me that was circulated by AFSCME, the union that represents our City workers. The drawing, which shows me with a large, exaggerated nose, reproduces an old and ugly characterization of Jews that dates back to Nazi propaganda from the 1930s. This has no place in Santa Fe, not just with regard to me, but for everyone in our diverse city.

We pride ourselves on our histories, our diversity, our many cultures, backgrounds and experiences. Everyone is welcome here. That's what we believe, that's how we live. It's who we are.

We must reject this kind of divisive ugliness. I know Santa Feans join me in standing against hate here and across our country.

As our campaign season commences, I ask other candidates for office in Santa Fe to denounce these kinds of attacks—on anyone, for any reason. In particular, I call on the only other announced candidate for Mayor, JoAnne Vigil Coppler, to disavow these kinds of ugly tactics. We may disagree on issues, policies and programs. That's what campaigns are for, and I welcome those debates. But we should be able to stand together in denouncing hate, bias, discrimination, anti-Semitism and divisiveness.

There is far too much hatred in our country today. Left unchecked, we have seen how these divisions cause deep harm. Now more than ever it is critical that we all work together for the betterment of our community. People are being attacked for the color of their skin, their gender identity, their sexual orientation, their nation of origin, their religion. There's no place for that in Santa Fe. With hate crimes on the rise across the country, now is the time for all of us to speak out against bias, hate and discrimination in any form.