

February 22, 2022

Dear Speaker Garnett, President Fenberg, Majority Leaders Esgar, and Moreno, Minority Leaders McKean and Holbert:

The undersigned 104 County Commissioners representing 38 counties from across Colorado join the Colorado Association of School Boards, the Colorado Association of School Executives, the Colorado Municipal League, the Special District Association, local government, K-12, higher education, and other interests in expressing our **strong opposition** to any proposal mandating collective bargaining for all public employees.

- We **urge all members to oppose** any efforts to advance such legislation.

A top-down, mandated approach would **impose a significant unfunded mandate** on the undersigned stakeholders and **contradict Colorado's long history of local control**. *Note, the fiscal note on HB 20-1153, Colorado Partnership for Quality Jobs and Services Act, estimated implementation costs of over \$8 million over two fiscal years - and that was recognizing only a single partnership agreement.*

The potential fiscal implications of this proposal cannot be ignored -

- **for local government**, these costs would be **borne by taxpayers** – *at a time when families and businesses are already struggling.*
- **for K-12**, these costs would come at the **expense of direct services to students** – *at a time when students are most vulnerable and in need of extra support*
- **for higher education**, these costs would be **borne by increased student tuition** or the additional pressure on the general fund – *at a time when we need to be focusing on workforce development*

The undersigned **do NOT oppose collective bargaining as a policy** – we believe this is an individual employer/employee decision.

The undersigned **would equally oppose any efforts to create a blanket prohibition** on collective bargaining rights – again on the grounds that this is a matter of individual employer/employee decision.

Rather, **this opposition is directed at the inappropriateness of the General Assembly** (1) ***imposing a new unfunded mandate*** at a time when the impacted entities are doing all they can to continue to serve their constituencies as they recover from a pandemic, (2) ***struggle with increasing operating costs*** which strain already tightened budgets, and (3) ***inserting itself into local government, school, and higher education institution employment and budgetary matters*** that have been, and should remain, reserved to employers, employees, and – in many cases – voters of individual jurisdictions.

The General Assembly has provided **no evidence** that such a massive shift in public policy in Colorado is in any way warranted or justified and **no compelling reason** to insert itself into the employment matters of others. It is ***especially egregious that there will be no effort at the state level to compensate impacted entities*** for fiscal impacts of this new unfunded mandate.

As Commissioners representing a broad cross-section of constituents, **we urge you to oppose** any efforts to advance a **new unfunded mandate of state mandated local collective bargaining**.

**Sincerely,**

**Alamosa County**

Vern Heersink  
Lori Laske  
Michael Yahn

**Archuleta County**

Warren Brown

**Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado**

**Baca County**

Glen R. Ausmus  
Rick Butler  
Shiloh Freed

**Bent County**

Kim MacDonnell  
Chuck Netherton  
Jean Sykes

**Cheyenne County**

Darin Dickey  
R.J. Jolly  
Ronald R. Smith

**Crowley County**

Blaine Arbuthnot  
Roy Allen Elliott  
Terry McMillan

**Dolores County**

Floyd L. Cook  
Steve Garchar  
Julie Kibel

**Delta County**

Wendell Koontz  
Mike Lane  
Don Suppes

**Douglas County**

George Teal  
Lora Thomas

**Elbert County**

Rick Pettitt  
Chris Richardson  
Grant Thayer

**El Paso County**

Cami Bremer  
Carrie Geitner  
Longinos Gonzalez  
Stan VanderWerf  
Holly Williams

**Fremont County**

Debbie Bell  
Kevin Grantham  
Dwayne McFall

**Garfield County**

Tom Jankovsky  
John Martin  
Mike Samson

**Grand County**

Richard Cimino  
Merrit Linke  
Kristen Manguso

**Hinsdale County**

Richard Hurd

**Huerfano County**

John Galusha

**Jackson County**

Jeff Benson  
Coby Corkle  
Daniel E. Manville

**Kiowa County**

Mike Lening  
Donald Oswald  
Howard Robertson

**Kit Carson County**

Stan Hitchcock  
Dave Hornung  
Cory Wall

**Las Animas County**

Tony Hass  
Felix Lopez

**Lincoln County**

Steve Burgess  
Ed Schifferns  
Doug Stone

**Logan County**

Jane Bauder  
Joseph A McBride  
Byron Pelton

**Mesa County**

Cody Davis  
Scott McInnis  
Janet Rowland

**Mineral County**

Jesse Albright  
Ramona Weaver

**Moffat County**

Tony Bohrer  
Donald Broom  
Melody Villard

**Montezuma County**

James Candelaria  
Kent Lindsay  
Gerald Koppenhafer

**Montrose County**

Keith Caddy  
Sue Hansen  
Roger Rash

**Morgan County**

Mark Arndt  
Jon Becker  
Gordon Westhoff

**Otero County**

Jim Baldwin  
John Hostetler  
Rob Oquist

**Park County**

Ray Douglas  
Richard Elsner  
Amy Mitchell

**Phillips County**

Terry L. Hofmeister  
Garold Roberts  
Tom Timm

**Prowers County**

Wendy Buxton-Andrade  
Ron Cook  
Thomas Grasmick

**Rio Blanco County**

Gary Moyer

**Sedgwick County**

William Howard McCormick

**Teller County**

Robert Campbell  
Erik Stone  
Dan Williams

**Washington County**

Lea Ann Laybourn  
Kent Vance  
Tony N. Wells

**Weld County**

Perry Buck  
Mike Freeman  
Scott K. James  
Steve Moreno

**Yuma County**

Trent Bushner  
Scott Weaver  
Robin Wiley

cc: Members of the Colorado House of Representatives  
Members of Colorado Senate  
Governor Jared Polis  
Regional News Media  
Colorado Counties, Inc.