

Contact: Public Information Officer  
ELBERT COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
Phone: 720-639-5850  
Email: PIO@ElbertCounty-CO.gov  
Twitter: @ElbertCoPIO

215 Comanche Street  
Post Office Box 7  
Kiowa, CO 80177

**ELBERT COUNTY  
GOVERNMENT**

# Press Release

## **ELBERT COUNTY OFFICIALS JOIN IN OPPOSING SB22-230**

Forced Collective Bargaining Bill would Waste Taxpayer Dollars

**Kiowa, CO, May 10, 2022:** Today, the Commissioners and other Elected Officers of Elbert County joined 176 elected officials from 37 counties to oppose what might be the largest unfunded mandate ever considered by the Colorado General Assembly. Modeled after the Colorado WINS collective bargaining process that allowed unionization of nearly all the 30,000 state employees at a cost to Colorado taxpayers of over \$114M just in the first year, SB22-230 is anticipated to cost medium-sized counties such as ours \$436,892 regardless of whether or not employees choose to organize.

See Attached letter from elected officials across Colorado opposing this bill.

"If this bill passes, it will cost our taxpayers, it will cost our employees, and it will divert limited resources from providing services to our citizens", said Commissioner Chris Richardson. "We can't just pass our cost increases on to the people of Elbert County and, our citizens don't get to choose another source of local government services."

The increased costs associated with legal, human resources, and other required administrative actions is equal to nearly seven full time employees. "These costs could have real impact on our residents. Do we cut deputies just when we've finally filled our vacancies? Do we eliminate grader operators when our roads need constant attention? Do we cut caseworkers, DMV, elections? There are no good choices", states Commissioner Grant Thayer. "Or do we tap into our 'rainy-day' fund when it looks like we will need it to fund services through a looming recession."

Commissioner Rick Pettitt added, "All of our elected officials work side by side with our employees. We respect and appreciate all they do for our citizens, and we have worked very hard to bring pay and benefits up to the market rate. Many have received significant raises over the past several years and we keep working to improve their compensation. There is no need to hurt that effort with this unnecessary bill."

The bill has passed through the Senate and is scheduled for consideration in the House today. With over 200 bills left to address and less than 36 hours left in the session, Elbert County's elected officials strongly urge SB22-230 be dropped, and bills that address real needs in our state become the focus.

Elbert County is located approximately 30 miles southeast of Denver and is home to over 26,000 residents. We are a unique mix of suburban bedroom communities and rural agricultural areas. The county provides essential statutory services and supportive infrastructure to our citizens in a professional, respectful, and cost-effective manner while creating a working environment that supports their endeavors, western lifestyle and rights as individuals. We strive to be viewed by our citizens and employees as the best place to live, work, and conduct business in Colorado; led in a responsive, effective, transparent, and professional manner.

##.

**For Immediate Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**An Open Letter from Elected County Officials throughout Colorado**

An Open Letter  
The Honorable Jared Polis, Colorado Governor  
Members of the Colorado General Assembly

Subject: SB22-230 Collective Bargaining For Counties

Concerning the expansion of county employees' rights to collective bargaining, and, in connection therewith, making an appropriation.

May 11, 2022

Governor Polis- et al;

Since January 2022, Colorado Counties Incorporated (CCI) has been aware of impending legislation from the Colorado House of Representatives that would force mandated collective bargaining upon cities, counties and higher education in Colorado. Despite countless attempts and pleading with the drafters of the bill for the opportunity to discuss the bill, and communicate about the potential impacts of mandated collective bargaining and most importantly, what that would mean for our constituents, we were ignored.

It's long been said that the best government is closest to the people and CCI was formed to give counties a voice to support and protect two primary tenets:

First, no unfunded mandates from the State and,

Second, just as important, preserve local control.

Throughout the "process" cities and higher education were invited to the table, successfully convincing the drafters to exclude their organizations from the bill.

This was largely due to the huge expense the bill would thrust upon them, just as with counties. Higher education made the case that there was no way they could implement mandated collective bargaining without forcing that cost onto their students through increased tuition.

Counties were not so fortunate. Despite our efforts and the efforts of our organization to gain a seat at the table, a bill was introduced in the Senate (not the House) with only two weeks left in the legislative session. All but one of our Democrat senators, 20 out of 21 signed on as co-sponsors. They obviously got a seat at the table, while counties were left out.

This particular piece of legislation represents the largest unfunded mandate upon counties in the history of the state of Colorado. It takes the decision whether to collectively bargain away from local employees, elected officials and voters, instead mandates it. At the Senate Committee, only 36 hours after the introduction of the bill, the sponsor stated it was perhaps the

"best stakeholder bill ever", despite not having sufficient conversation with county commissioners via Colorado Counties Incorporated.

Governor Polis, every local government association from cities to districts oppose this bill, as well as the undersigned county elected officials. It does not purport to solve any problem. In fact, it creates huge problems for counties who will have no choice but to cut services and jobs to pay for the cost of mandated collective bargaining.

Even in those few Democrat counties that support this bill, they have largely never approved collective bargaining in their own counties, even though they have the authority to do so today. This represents a massive usurping of local authority and local control from the government which is closest to the people, Counties!

It is a testament to poor legislative process- a massive unfunded mandate at the end of the legislative session.

Governor Polis, We ask that you stand up with Colorado Counties and our residents in support of local control and against unfunded mandates.

Governor Polis, please Veto SB22-230  
Signed,

**Alamosa County**

Vern Heersink, commissioner

**Arapahoe County**

Nancy Sharpe, commissioner

**Baca County**

Glen R. Ausmus, commissioner  
Shiloh Freed, commissioner  
Rick Butler, commissioner  
Aaron Shiplett, sheriff  
Gayla Thompson, assessor  
Sharon Dubois, clerk & recorder  
Jozy Stegman, treasurer

**Bent County**

Jean Sykes, commissioner  
Kim MacDonnell, commissioner  
Chuck Netherton, commissioner  
Kathy Brown, treasurer  
Lynda Moss, clerk & recorder  
Jason Nichols, coroner

**Cheyenne County**

Ron Smith, commissioner  
RJ Jolly, commissioner  
Darin Dickey, commissioner

**Conejos County**

Carlos Garcia, commissioner  
Mitchell Jarvies, commissioner  
Joseph Baroz, commissioner  
Tresses Martinez, administrator

**Crowley County**

Terry McMillian, commissioner  
Roy Elliott, commissioner  
Blaine Arbuthnot, commissioner  
Melinda Carter, clerk & recorder  
Holly McCuiston, Treasurer  
Terry Reeves, sheriff

**Delta County**

Mike Lane, commissioner  
Don Suppes, commissioner  
Wendell Koontz, commissioner

**Dolores County**

Floyd Cook, Commission Chair  
Julie Kibel, Commission Vice Chair  
Steve Garchar, Commissioner  
Don Wilson, Sheriff  
Janie Stiasny, Treasurer  
Lana Hancock, Clerk & Recorder  
Berna Ernst, Assessor  
Dennis Golbricht, County Attorney

**Douglas County**

Abe Laydon, commissioner  
George Teal, commissioner  
Lora Thomas, commissioner  
Tony Spurlock, sheriff  
Dave Gill, treasurer  
Lisa Frizell, assessor  
Jill Romann, coroner

**Elbert County**

Chris Richardson, commissioner  
Rick Pettit, commissioner  
Grant Thayer, commissioner  
Tim Norton, sheriff  
Dallas Schroeder, clerk & recorder  
Susan Murphy, assessor  
Sherry Hewlett, treasurer  
Sandy Graeff, coroner

**El Paso County**

Stan Vanderwerf, commissioner  
Carrie Geitner, commissioner  
Holly Williams, commissioner  
Longinos Gonzalez, commissioner  
Cami Bremer, commissioner  
Check Broerman, clerk & recorder  
Steve Schleiker, assessor

**Fremont County**

Debbie Bell, commissioner  
Dwayne McFall, commissioner  
Kevin Grantham, commissioner  
Allen Cooper, sheriff  
Stacey Seifort, assessor  
Kathy Elliott, treasurer  
Justin Grantham, clerk & recorder  
Randy Keller, coroner

**Garfield County**

John Martin, commissioner  
Mike Samson, commissioner

**Grand County**

Kris Manguso, commissioner  
Merrit Linke, commissioner  
Richard Cimino, commissioner  
Sara Rosene, clerk & recorder  
Brett Schroetlin, sheriff

**Huerfano County**

John Galusha, commissioner  
Gerald Cisneros, commissioner  
Arica Andreatta, commissioner

**Jackson County**

Coby Corkle, commissioner

**Kit Carson County**

Stan Hitchcock, commissioner  
Cory Wall, commissioner  
Dave Hornung, commissioner

**Kiowa County**

Butch Robertson, commissioner  
Donald Oswald, commissioner  
Michael Lenning, commissioner

**Lincoln County**

Steve Burgess, commissioner  
Doug Stone, commissioner  
Ed E. Schiffers, commissioner

**Logan County**

Byron H Pelton, commissioner  
Joe McBride, commissioner  
Jane Bauder, commissioner  
Brett Powell, sheriff  
Pam Bacon, clerk & recorder  
Peggy Michaels, assessor

**Mesa County**

Cody Davis, commissioner  
Janet Rowland, commissioner  
Scott McInnis, commissioner  
Todd Rowell, sheriff  
Sheila Reiner, treasurer

**Mineral County**

Ramona Weber, commissioner  
Jesse Albright, commissioner  
Scott Lamb, commissioner  
Amy Wetherill, treasurer  
Libby Lamb, assessor  
Eryn Wintz, clerk & recorder

**Moffat County**

Melody Villard, commissioner

**Montezuma County**

Kent Lindsay, commissioner  
 Jim Candelaria, commissioner  
 Gerald Koppenhafer, commissioner

**Montrose County**

Keith Caddy, commissioner  
 Sue Hansen, commissioner  
 Roger Rash, commissioner  
 Tressa Guynes, clerk & recorder

**Morgan County**

Mark Arndt, commissioner  
 Gordon Westhoff, commissioner  
 Jon Becker, commissioner

**Otero County**

Jim Baldwin, commissioner  
 Rob Oquist, commissioner  
 John Hostetler, commissioner  
 Shawn Mobley, sheriff  
 Ken Hood, assessor  
 Lynn Scott, clerk & recorder

**Park County**

Dick Elsner, commissioner  
 Ray Douglas Commissioner  
 Amy Mitchell, commissioner

**Phillips County**

Terry Hoffmeister, commissioner  
 Tom Timm, commissioner  
 Garold Roberts, commissioner  
 Beth Ziller, clerk & recorder  
 Tom Elliott, sheriff  
 Sharon Michael, treasurer

**Pueblo County**

Garrison Ortiz, commissioner

**Teller County**

Dan Williams, commissioner  
 Erik Stone, commissioner  
 Robert Campbell, commissioner  
 Jason Mikesell, sheriff  
 Mark Czelusta, treasurer & public trustee

Krystal Brown, clerk & recorder  
 David "Colt" Simmons, assessor  
 Steve Trasky, coroner  
 Eric Simonsen, surveyor

**Prowers County**

Wendy Buxton-Andrade, Commissioner  
 Tom Grasmick, Commissioner  
 Ron Cook, Commissioner  
 Jana Coen, Clerk  
 Judy Whitman, Treasurer  
 Andy Wyatt, Assessor  
 Marge Campbell, Coroner  
 Sam Zordel, Sheriff  
 Rose Pugliese, county attorney  
 Joshua Vogel, District Attorney 15th JD

**Rio Grande County**

Gene Glover, commissioner  
 Scott Heersink, commissioner  
 John Noffske, commissioner

**Washington County**

Kent Vance, commissioner  
 Lea Ann Laybourn, commissioner  
 Tony Wells, commissioner  
 John Stivers, sheriff  
 Annie Kuntz, clerk & recorder  
 Debra A Cooper, treasurer  
 Larry Griese, assessor

**Weld County**

Scott James, commissioner  
 Mike Freeman, commissioner  
 Steven Moreno, commissioner  
 Perry Buck, commissioner  
 Lori Saine, commissioner  
 Steve Reams, sheriff  
 Carly Koppes, clerk & recorder  
 Brenda Dones, assessor

**Yuma County**

Scott Weaver, commissioner  
 Trent Busher, commissioner  
 Robin Wiley, commissioner

##