



February 25, 2022

The Honorable Jared Polis, Governor
136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203-1792

Re: Collective bargaining for local governments

Dear Governor Polis:

On behalf of the General Government Steering Committee of Colorado Counties, Incorporated, we are writing to you today to voice our concerns regarding the direction that the local government collective bargaining conversation has taken. While we greatly appreciate your staff reaching out to us to clearly state your preferences on any potential legislation, we are very concerned about a mandated collective bargaining approach that applies **only** to county governments and higher education.

Like every other employer in Colorado, county governments are struggling in a post-COVID world. As you are acutely aware, county governments have served as the frontline for the local pandemic response, and our workforce has admirably served the state and its citizens. However, this exemplary service has not come without a cost. Our workforce is suffering from burnout and the stress of dealing with the pandemic. This is compounded by a nationwide labor shortage that is resulting in vacancies in many key positions.

It is wholly inequitable to burden just the counties with this collective bargaining obligation. It has the potential to make hiring and retaining people in a post-COVID world even more difficult, especially as we compete with our municipalities for a limited pool of public sector employees.

There are also state budgetary impacts that must be considered if collective bargaining for counties moves forward. As counties are responsible for delivering a wide number of state services (elections, human services, courts and district attorneys, law enforcement, public health, etc.) the state shares in the cost of providing those services. If counties are forced to pay higher wages and benefits, there will be a direct fiscal impact to not only counties but the state as well.

At this time, CCI would like to express our strong opposition to narrowing the costs and additional impacts of this legislation from all local governments to solely counties.

We thank you for your time and consideration and look forward to continued engagement on this matter.

Sincerely,

Hilary Cooper, Chair
CCI General Government Steering Committee

Scott James, Vice Chair
CCI General Government Steering Committee

cc: The Honorable Alec Garnett, Speaker, Colorado House of Representatives
The Honorable Daneya Esgar, Majority Leader, Colorado House of Representatives
The Honorable Hugh McKeen, Minority Leader, Colorado House of Representatives
The Honorable Steve Fenberg, President, Colorado Senate
The Honorable Dominic Moreno, Majority Leader, Colorado Senate
The Honorable Chris Holbert, Minority Leader, Colorado Senate

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