



2025 Legislative Issue Form

To propose a CCI legislative issue, please complete this form.

Feel free to use more than one page and include any supplemental materials.

1.) **Contact Information** (of the person bringing forth the issue):

- a. **Name:** Phil Dorenkamp / Brian Blasi
- b. **Title:** County Administrator / SC TPR Administrator
- c. **County:** Las Animas
- d. **Phone Number:** 719-845-2562 / 719-845-1133 x220
- e. **E-Mail Address:** phil.dorenkamp@lasanimascounty.org / bblasi@sccog.net

2.) **Issue/Problem to be addressed** (What is the problem this legislation is seeking to solve?)

The Colorado Transportation Commission (TC) is considering a proposal to reallocate the Transportation Planning Region (TPR) seats on the Statewide Transportation Advisory (STAC.) CDOT has recommended to the TC that a TPR seat on the STAC be removed from southern Colorado and Given to the Intermountain Region. If this happens, southern Colorado will lose a precious voice in the statewide transportation planning process. It is therefore our recommendation to increase the number of seats on the STAC by one to enable southern Colorado to keep its voice while at the same time allowing the intermountain region to have more of a transportation planning voice in Colorado. As currently written, Statue 43-1-1102 (8) (a) defines “Transportation planning region” as a region of the state as defined by the rule or regulation process required by section 43-1-1103(5). The maximum number of such regions shall be fifteen unless such number is increased pursuant to paragraph (b) of this subsection (8). Legislation is sought to increase the number of TPRs by one.

3.) **Background on this Issue/Problem** (How did this come to be? Why are you seeking a legislative remedy?)

TPRs were formed to assist in the statewide transportation planning process. Each TPR is responsible for preparing a long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to identify goals and future needs for their communities. They were established in 1992 after the Colorado General Assembly enacted legislation in 1991 that directed CDOT to provide strategic statewide transportation planning. The term TPR is inclusive of these types: non-MPO TPRs, MPO TPRs, and TPRs with both MPO and non-MPO areas. The 10 rural TPRs in Colorado include the Central Front Range, Eastern, Gunnison Valley, Intermountain, Northwest, San Luis Valley, South Central, Southeast, Southwest, and Upper Front Range. The 5 urban MPOs in Colorado include the Denver Regional Council of Governments, Grand Valley MPO, North Front Range MPO, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, and the Pueblo Area Council of Governments.

On April 28, 2023, Governor Polis signed House Bill 23-1101, the Ozone Season Transit Grant Program Flexibility bill, into law. The bill’s focus was to allow state transportation agencies to have more flexibility when using ozone season transit grants. Section 3 of the bill requires the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT or Department) to analyze the consistency and transparency of the transportation planning process across Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs) in a study and provide recommendations for possible changes to the Transportation Commission (Commission or TC) on or before November 30, 2023.

The study was concluded by CDOT staff having two related recommendations for boundary changes, and they are focused primarily on representation at STAC. Staff analyzed statewide and regional data covering the various statutory requirements and solicited and received public comments as part of the effort. Formal support or opposition to proposed boundary changes has been recorded by CDOT and are included in this study.

- a. Combine SETPR and SCTPR into one new TPR.
- b. Divide the Intermountain TPR into two TPRs thus reducing Colorado’s statewide transportation voice. The West IMTPR would include Garfield, Pitkin, and the SW portion of Eagle County. The East IMTPR would

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By Friday, July 12.



include Summit, Lake, and the bulk of Eagle County. Eagle County would be divided along the shared Eagle County RTA/ RFTA boundaries.

4.) **Proposed Solution/Legislative Remedy to this issue.**

The proposed solution is to pass legislation to amend the original 1991 legislation by adding an additional rural Transportation Planning Region. This would allow Intermountain to separate while preserving the South Central and Southeast TPRs and their existing TPR and STAC representation.

5.) **Have you explored a non-legislative solution to this problem?**

Yes, during CDOT's South Central public comment meeting, opposition to their proposal to combine the SC and SE TPRs was made clear. CDOT's recommendation may have some static rationale for the suggested merger, but these statistics ignore the fact that the citizens in our areas have been historically underserved, disproportionately impacted, marginalized, and excluded. Case in point, in CDOT's conducting this HB23-1101 study an advisory committee was assembled to gather data and receive feedback. Although it was clear this committee was not intended to represent the entire State, it's interesting to note that there was no representation from either the SC or SE TPRs (to be merged) while there were three members from the Intermountain region (to be divided). Additionally, the CDOT slide showing this advisory committee member makeup was not included in CDOT's SC presentation, along with other pertinent slides, that were included in the Region 3/Intermountain slide deck.

A majority of the potentially negatively impacted Counties have testified at the Transportation Commission meeting while others have written letters of opposition to this proposed forced merger. The TC has tabled the action until their November meeting.

6.) **Statutory Citation to be modified AND proposed/revised language (The Colorado Revised Statute is available for free at [this link](#), by selecting "Colorado Revised Statutes").**

Amend 43-2-1102 (8) to allow for one additional Rural Transportation Region.

7.) **Relationship of this issue to the County Commissioner's roles and/or authorities.**

County Commissioners sit on the Transportation Planning Region board and are voting members. In this role County Commissioners are responsible for ensuring effective transportation planning and service delivery within their jurisdictions. This proposal directly impacts their roles by altering the regional framework through which planning, and resource allocation are managed. It affects their authority to advocate for regional needs and participate in transportation planning processes.

Furthermore, the proposed consolidation of the South Central and Southeastern TPRs appears to benefit another area of the state by granting them an additional vote on the Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee thus diluting SC and SE representation all the while providing no tangible benefits for these regions.

8.) **Has this proposal been approved by the Board of County Commissioners?**

No formal action has taken place, but they are all in favor of this process. We have multiple letters of support from multiple counties.

9.) **List any potential Proponents/Opponents & their perspectives; indicate any groups/individuals with whom you have already discussed this issue.**

Proponents:

Huerfano County
Las Animas County
Baca County

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Bent County
Crowley County
Kiowa County
Otero County
Prowers County

Potential Opponents:
Colorado Department of Transportation

10.) **Have you visited with your legislator(s) about this proposal? What was their reaction? Are members of your delegation likely to sponsor, support, or oppose this proposal?**

Yes, we recently had a discussion with Representative Ty Winter and Senator Rod Pelton. They are in support of our proposal and have agreed to sponsor the legislation. They are in the process of seeking colleagues to also support the bill. The logistics of who the final sponsors will be is still under discussion.

11.) **Anticipated Fiscal Impact (to counties, state, other stakeholders, etc.).**

Minimal.

12.) **Please list the local subject matter experts CCI staff can follow up with for more information on this proposal.**

Luis Lopez, Las Animas County Commissioner, luis.lopez2@lasanimascounty.org

Stephanie Gonzales, Executive Director, Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development, seced@seced.net 719-336-3850

Brian Pettet, Director of Public Works, Pitkin County, brian.pettet@pitkincounty.com 970-920-5392

Brian Blasi, Executive Director, South Central Council of Governments, bblasi@sccog.net, 719-845-1133 x220

13.) **If your county is submitting multiple issue forms, please rank each issue.**

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