



April 22, 2021

Members of the Joint Budget Committee
Legislative Service Building, 3rd Floor
200 East 14th Ave.
Denver, CO 80203



Re: Request to Support Budget Amendments Securing Additional \$3 Million for Body-Worn Cameras, Data, and Storage

Dear Members of the Joint Budget Committee:

On February 2, we communicated our support and appreciation for the Colorado Department of Public Safety's request for \$3 million to help fund the body-worn camera requirement in [SB20-217](#), Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity. This figure, submitted during the Governor's Budget Process last fall, was the best guess based on information local governments had gathered at that point.

As more local governments budget to implement this unfunded mandate, we continue to learn that \$3 million is not enough to help onboard communities seeking to comply in the first year of the phased-in implementation.

As such, Colorado Counties Inc. (CCI), Colorado Municipal League (CML) and law enforcement partners urge your **SUPPORT** of the additional \$3 million budget amendment that passed both the Senate (SB205_J.019) and House (SB205_J.061) last week.

Colorado's local governments and law enforcement agencies support the use of body-worn cameras, but a clear path to funding is necessary. In addition to the cost of purchasing body-worn cameras, funding is needed for storage and staff to review and redact footage of minors, victims, nudity, etc.

For counties, cities, and law enforcement agencies the purchase of body-worn cameras and their associated data collection equipment requires an upfront, first-year investment that can range from \$17,000-\$3.5 million per county. Arapahoe County, for example, estimates it will cost \$2.5 million to comply with SB 20-217's body-worn camera requirement [1]. Adams County has an estimated first year cost of \$3.5 million for body-worn cameras, data collection, and additional FTE for video redaction and release. The first-year collective cost for just 20 county respondents is \$9.4 million [2].

For Colorado municipalities, out of 165 departments, 24 currently use body-worn cameras. For some of Colorado's larger municipalities that do not have body-worn cameras, the cost can range between \$400,000 - \$1.5 million per municipality. Lakewood, for example, expects \$1.5 million annually and Englewood expects a minimum of \$443,400 or up to \$800,000 depending on the vendor [3]. These costs not only include body-worn cameras, but data storage and FTE for video redaction and release.





In a recent survey of Colorado police chiefs and sheriffs, 56 percent of respondents said they did not have sufficient funding to comply with SB 20-217's body-worn camera requirements [4]. Law enforcement agencies believe in the use of body-worn cameras. The only thing that has prevented them from having them is the fiscal constraints on their respective cities and counties. This new requirement comes at a time when local government revenues have taken a hit due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



During the budget debate, [HB15-1285](#), Law Enforcement Use of Body-Worn Cameras was referenced. This bill created the Body-Worn Camera Grant Program in the Department of Public Safety and encouraged local governments to purchase body-worn cameras. However, this fund never received any appropriations to support local governments in implementing that policy goal of the 2015 General Assembly.



Similar suggestions have been made that federal grants could be used for implementation. However, the Byrne Justice Grant Program is incredibly competitive and relies on a complicated formula and allocation process which means local governments and law enforcement agencies are not likely to secure the funding they need [5]. Additionally, each year the federal grant program releases areas of emphasis, meaning the money allocated may not necessarily be used for body-worn cameras, data collection, or the need for additional FTEs. For example, the emphasis area in 2020 for awarding allocation was for the following: addressing violent crime, enforcing firearm laws, officer safety and wellness (preventing death/injury in the line of duty), safer policing for safe communities and fentanyl detection [6].



Given the importance of data collection, the use of body-worn cameras, and the role they play in improving policing outcomes, it is critical that the implementation of SB20-217 is done right. To do so, the state must sufficiently and consistently fund the Body-Worn Camera Grant Program.



Thank you for your consideration,

Colorado Counties Inc.

Colorado Municipal League

Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police

Colorado District Attorneys' Council

Colorado Fraternal Order of Police

Colorado Police Protective Association

County Sheriffs of Colorado





[1] Sentinel Colorado Article “ Arapahoe County to spend \$2.5 million to comply with new police reform bill” <https://sentinelcolorado.com/orecent-headlines/arapahoe-county-to-spend-2-5-million-to-comply-with-new-police-reform-bill/>

[2] Data collected by CCI: <http://ccionline.org/download/Compiled-Data-on-Costs-of-217-4.20.21.pdf>

[3] Data collected by CML

[4] Data collected by law enforcement agencies

[5] About the Byrne Justice Grant Program: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10691>

[6] Byrne Justice Grant Program Areas of Emphasis, see page 2: <https://www.in.gov/cji/files/Program-Narrative-Byrne-JAG.pdf>