



April 27, 2022

The Honorable Senator Robert Rodriguez, Chair
The Honorable Senator Jessie Danielson, Vice Chair
The Honorable Senator James Coleman
The Honorable Senator Chris Kolker
The Honorable Senator Larry Liston
The Honorable Senator Kevin Priola
The Honorable Senator Rob Woodward

The Honorable Members of the Senate Business, Labor, and Technology Committee and Colorado General Assembly:

As the elected leaders representing Douglas County Government we work hard to take care of our more than 1,300 employees – providing among some of the best benefits and competitive salaries in the state, as well as a workplace environment that encourages and rewards creativity and ambition in service to our nearly 380,000 residents.

That said, we are concerned that SB22-230 -- an unfunded mandate on Counties – will apply a top-down collective bargaining obligation, specifically costing the taxpayers of Douglas County up to \$50 million, and negatively impacting the relationship we have with our employees and the services we deliver to our communities.

Collective bargaining is NOT designed to improve public services – in fact SB22-230 does not even consider impact to services. As you know County governments are *already* authorized to accept and recognize collective bargaining units. This bill makes it *mandatory* for some, but not all, local governments to accept unions at the county level including Douglas County.

County property tax revenues -- the primary source of revenue in our budget that funds services to Douglas County – are finite in nature. We cannot “generate” more revenue without asking voters for a tax increase, nor would we want to. Collective bargaining will necessitate additional staff time, legal resources, human resources expertise, dispute resolution costs and ultimately higher workforce costs.

We are concerned that unionizing will create massive barricades between our employees and their supervisors, interfering with the healthy working environment we have today, where supervisors are the most trusted source in an employee’s relationship with its employer.

For these reasons and more we believe collective bargaining is a local decision that should be left up to individual counties and their employees, not mandated by the state.

This statewide collective bargaining mandate is nothing more than a solution looking for a problem. It is bad for our County. We respectfully ask for a NO vote on SB22-230.

Respectfully,

Abe Laydon
Douglas County Commissioner
District I

George Teal
Douglas County Commissioner
District II

Lora Thomas
Douglas County Commissioner
District II