



Please Vote NO on Mandated Collective Bargaining for County Governments

Sponsors: Rep. Esgar; Sen. Fenberg

HB22-_____ would implement a top-down, mandated collective bargaining obligation on county governments across Colorado and endanger our working relationship with our employees. **To be clear, counties do NOT oppose collective bargaining – in fact, several counties have embraced collective bargaining** and it is working in those jurisdictions. The hiring and compensation of employees is a matter of local control and collective bargaining should be a county-by-county decision.

Counties are already facing tightened budgets due to the continued COVID crisis, increased operating costs (gas, inflation, etc.) and supply chain issues. County property tax revenues are finite in nature and cannot be increased without a citizen vote. This unfunded mandate will necessitate additional staff time, legal help, human resources expertise, dispute resolution costs and ultimately higher wages and additional benefits. **This unfunded mandate may result in cuts to essential services to our citizens.**

Another major concern is that while the legislation contains a prohibition on a union boss calling for a strike, it does **not** actually prohibit employees from striking (as they are in the Colorado WINS model (C.R.S. §24-50-1109(3)(a))). County employees are front line providers for services such as distributing cash assistance, plowing snow off roads, enforcing laws and protecting the public. **If county employees were to walk off the job during a labor dispute it could very well threaten the health and safety of the public.**

Furthermore, there are also state budgetary impacts that must be considered 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 these services and if counties are forced to pay higher wages and benefits, there will be a direct fiscal impact to the state as well.

County governments have a proud employment tradition in Colorado. The General Assembly has provided no evidence that such a massive shift in public employment policy is warranted or necessary. This top-down collective bargaining approach is bad for local government and bad for Colorado.

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