



(719) 689-2988 [www.co.teller.co.us](http://www.co.teller.co.us) Fax (719) 686-7900

March 22, 2022

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

Re: Collective bargaining for Counties

Dear Governor Polis,


The Teller County Commissioners are extremely concerned about the possibility of collective bargaining being thrust upon counties in Colorado, especially as we focus on developing our Roadmap to Moving Forward from the pandemic.

Teller County, like many counties, is struggling in the Post-Covid world. Cripple Creek city revenues still lag 50% below pre-pandemic levels and the county is stepping up to try to help Cripple Creek through this fiscal crisis. The County struggles to find qualified employees for our Health and Human Services, Road and Bridge, and Sheriff's Departments. We are down 50% on jail detention officers and snowplow drivers, who are essential for the life, health and safety of our residents.

Collective bargaining has never been a state mandate for Colorado, but it is permissive, with some counties making a local decision to enter into collective bargaining. For small counties with small budgets, like Teller County, it would turn what is currently a family-like organization into an adversarial one, pitting department against department and employees versus the County. Teller County government has limited funding, exacerbated by the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) taking the bulk of gaming impact funds away from Teller County.

Collective bargaining would most certainly increase county labor costs and attorney costs, and will also negatively impact the non-statutory services we provide our residents. As elected local officials, our experience with collective bargaining is limited or non-existent, requiring additional budgetary expenditures for labor law attorneys and increased labor costs. It will be a tremendous burden on small counties and would likely result in a reduction in our benefits package, which currently allows for any employee to add their family to our health insurance for less than \$100/month. Despite our financial challenges in Teller County, the commissioners recently were able to increase wages of county employees above the current CPI inflation rate. In short, collective bargaining isn't needed in Teller County.

We are keeping pace through sound financial management, but our recent success would be short-lived should collective bargaining be mandated. Teller County strongly opposes any state mandate for collective bargaining and respectfully requests that collective bargaining remain permissive in nature, rather than compelled. Teller County prides itself on providing excellent and efficient services to our residents, and in the culture we foster for all our county employee families. Thank you for your sincere consideration of our position.



Dan Williams  
Chair, District 1



Erik Stone  
Vice-Chair, District 3



Robert Campbell  
Commissioner, District 2

cc:

The Honorable Alec Garnett, Colorado Speaker of the House  
The Honorable Daneya Esgar, Majority Leader, Colorado House of Representatives  
The Honorable Hugh McKean, 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  
The Honorable Dennis Hisey, Colorado Senate  
The Honorable Mark Baisley, Colorado House of Representatives