



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MANAGER

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**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Board of County Commissioners  
**From:** Scott Vargo, County Manager  
Jeffrey L. Huntley, County Attorney  
Marty Ferris, Finance Director  
**Date:** August 10, 2020  
**Re:** Proposal to Refer Ballot Measure Authorizing Limited Adjustments to Summit County's Mill Levy Authority to Maintain Existing County Services, With No Net Increase in Tax Revenues

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As you know, the State of Colorado is authorized and required by law to periodically set statewide assessment rates and may also impose changes in the method of calculating assessed valuation for purposes of setting future local property tax mill levies. These statewide adjustments and any other state-imposed changes to the assessed value calculations have resulted in (and will likely continue to result in) a decline in the local property tax base, causing a decrease in local revenues despite those revenues being otherwise duly authorized by law, including authorization by local voters.

Many of the initiatives our community has supported over the years to provide emergency response services at the 911 dispatch center; wildland fire prevention; public health services, including affordable mental health care and suicide prevention; open space and trails; early childhood education; environmental protection; and even road maintenance would need to be cut or postponed in the event the assessed value tax base continues to decline due to state-imposed changes. We believe that Summit County must be able to provide the vital services that help ensure and maintain our safety, local economy, and good quality of life in these challenging times.

Multiple jurisdictions in Summit County and other mountain communities have sought and received local voter approval to maintain their existing revenue levels and corresponding critical public services. Staff is recommending that the BOCC similarly refer such a ballot measure to the voters at the November 3, 2020, coordinated General Election. This proposed measure would be a TABOR ballot issue authorizing limited adjustments to the County's tax mill levy authority to stabilize revenue in the event of any changes to the state assessment rate(s) or calculations related thereto.

We have prepared the attached draft resolution and ballot measure for your review and approval. Please let us know if you have any questions or comments.