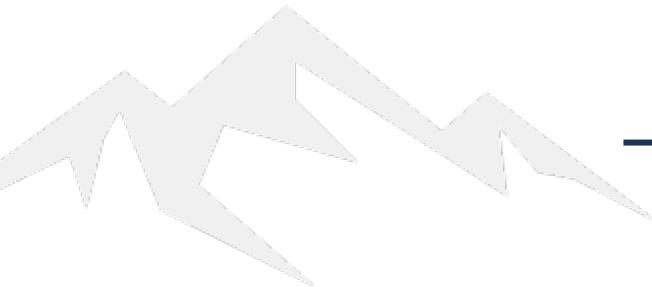




The Impact of State Unfunded Mandates

December 2025



About the Authors



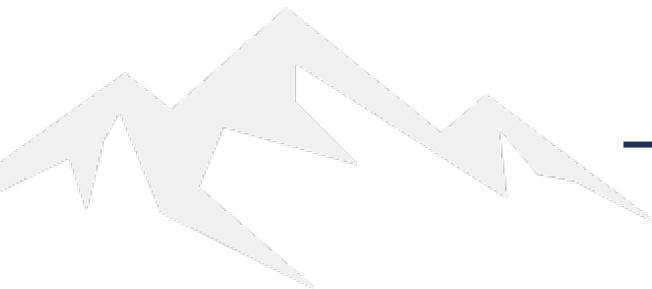
Fmr. House Minority Leader Rose Pugliese

Representative Pugliese, a two-term Mesa County Commissioner, is celebrated for her significant contributions to enhancing government transparency and fostering bipartisan cooperation. Her dedication extends to crucial areas such as family affairs, fostering affordability and attainability, and safeguarding parental rights and choice. As a first-generation American, she proudly holds a juris doctorate degree. In addition to the rewarding role of being a single mother to two children, she remains steadfast in her commitment to her community and constituents.



Michael Tsogt

Michael Tsogt is a Policy Analyst at the Advance Colorado Institute. His areas of policy and research include education, budget/fiscal matters, and public safety. During undergrad, Michael was elected as the Academic Senator for student government, covered sports and entertainment for the student newspaper, and participated in several political fellowships and opportunities, including at the Center for the Study of Government and the Individual, the American Enterprise Institute, and the Intercollegiate Studies Institute. Michael graduated from the University of Colorado with a degree in political science. He and his wife live in Colorado Springs with their son.



Executive Summary

Too often, the State mandates programs, regulations, and requirements on local governments without adequate funding or any funding at all. With the now consistent budget crisis at the State level since the end of the American Rescue Plan Act and other COVID-related funding, the State continues to push unfunded mandates on local governments to accomplish its own goals.

This report will discuss the consequences of unfunded mandates on local governments – with a specific focus on counties – and how counties throughout Colorado are reacting.

Counties Rally Against Unfunded Mandates

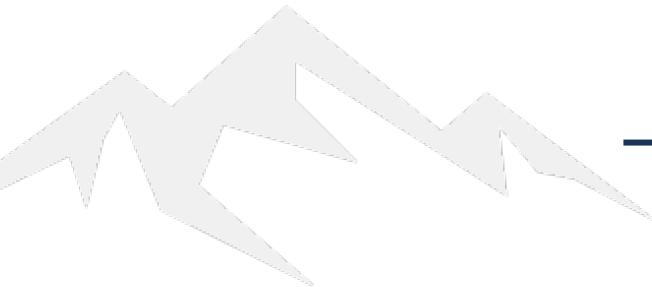
Mesa County, led by Commissioner Bobbie Daniel, has started a statewide coalition to raise the issue of unfunded mandates on counties to the State level. Commissioner Daniel reported in the Kiowa County Independent that Mesa County alone faces close to \$10 million in unfunded mandates every year. (1)

Statewide, a population-based estimate of the costs to counties may exceed \$361 million annually. (2)

These figures do not include the impact on municipalities. Cities are faced with many of the same burdens as counties, and those impacts may exceed \$1 billion annually.

To date, 43 counties (out of 64) in every corner of the State have written letters to the Governor and Democratic leadership in the Colorado State House and State Senate raising alarm bells on the costs of certain unfunded mandates, with six more counties in progress.

The counties are Democratic and Republican-led, and they are both urban and rural counties. The diversity in political leanings and geography demonstrates that the burden of unfunded mandates on local governments is not a partisan issue.



The Culprits: Specific Legislation Named

Counties have specifically called out several pieces of legislation in their unfunded mandates letters.

Senate Bill 23-166: “Establishment of a Wildlife Resiliency Code Board”

SB 23-166 establishes a Wildfire Resiliency Code Board to develop and adopt model codes for the State. Local governments are required to adopt these model codes within three months of the Code Board’s adoption, regardless of where they are located in the State. (3)

The fiscal note for the bill outlines specific expenses incurred and paid for by the State, which includes full-time employees, travel and expense reimbursements, and staff tablets and cell phones. (4)

These costs are expenditures for Colorado’s Department of Public Safety, and as such, are allocated funds from the State budget.

On the other hand, local governments tasked with the implementation of new model codes passed are not allotted any funds from the State budget and are required to front all additional implementation costs.

While the State ensures the Department of Public Safety is adequately funded to pay for a portion of this measure, local governments are not funded by the State for their portion and are left to cut their budgets to comply.

State Expenditures

The bill requires the DFPC to administer and support the board, including the provision of office space, equipment, and administrative staff. Additionally, the division will create and support a publicly accessible website to house information about board actions and codes adopted. These requirements increase state expenditures in the Department of Public Safety by \$295,660 in FY 2023-24, and by \$374,640 in FY 2024-25, paid from the Wildfire Resiliency Code Board Cash Fund. Expenditures are shown in Table 2 and detailed below.

Table 2
Expenditures Under SB 23-166

	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25
Department of Public Safety		
Personal Services	\$152,849	\$152,943
Operating Expenses	\$2,700	\$2,700
Capital Outlay Costs	\$13,340	-
Legal Services	-	\$95,166
Staff Tablets, Cell Phone	\$3,170	\$230
Vehicle Lease and Mileage	\$7,713	\$7,713
Travel & Expense Reimbursements	\$79,530	\$79,530
Centrally Appropriated Costs ¹	\$36,358	\$36,358
FTE – Personal Services	2.0 FTE	2.0 FTE
FTE – Legal Services	-	0.5 FTE
Total Cost	\$295,660	\$374,640
Total FTE	2.0 FTE	2.5 FTE

¹ Centrally appropriated costs are not included in the bill’s appropriation.



Senate Bill 24-005: “Prohibit Landscaping Practices for Water Conservation”

SB 24-005 prohibits local governments from allowing particular landscaping in their communities under the premise that certain landscaping practices impede water conservation efforts. (5) The bill’s fiscal note is clear that the legislation will increase costs for local governments. The state advises that these costs “may be offset by implementing and enforcing new fines or fees related to the bill’s restrictions.” (6)

In other words, the State is recommending that local governments charge citizens additional money to comply with a State-imposed mandate. If a local government prefers not to charge citizens, the county or city will be on the hook for the costs.

Local Government

The bill may increase local government workload and costs in several ways. First, local governments will need to update ordinances and other regulations to reflect the prohibition on artificial turf, and will be required to respond to complaints, investigate potential violations, and take enforcement actions. Second, when undertaking future landscaping projects, local governments may have higher costs to pay for the installation and maintenance of alternative surfaces at their facilities. Some costs to local governments may be offset by implementing and enforcing new fines or fees related to the bill’s restrictions.

House Bill 21-1286: “Energy Performance For Buildings”

HB 21-1286 modifies the standard that a local government must consider to evaluate, recommend, or implement energy cost-saving measures for certain buildings across the State. These measures include collecting energy usage on an annual basis, establishing performance standards for improvements in energy efficiency (e.g., 7% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2026, 20% by 2030), and implementing energy-saving upgrades. (7)

On April 24, 2024, the Denver Gazette reported that Colorado and the City of Denver were being sued in federal court over the regulations created by HB 21-1286, alleging that it violates federal laws. (8)



Far from saving on costs, the “cost of compliance for some 8,000 buildings that fall under the state regulation was estimated... at \$3.1 billion.” The plaintiffs described the standards as “impossible to achieve at any reasonable cost and are not, as the state suggests, mere energy usage requirements.” (8)

Local Government

County assessors will have increased workload to provide data and information to the CEO to implement the program. Local governments will incur expenses related to benchmarking and meeting the performance standards for covered buildings. These costs are not estimated in this fiscal note.

When this bill was passed, it was clear that legislators were fully aware that the bill, and others like it, would create new costs for local governments and that the State would not be paying for them: “Local governments will incur expenses related to benchmarking and meeting the performance standards for covered buildings. These costs are not estimated in this fiscal note.” (9)

House Bill 21-1250: “Measures to Address Law Enforcement Accountability”

HB 21-1250 requires local law enforcement agencies to increase data collection and the reporting of demographic information for people they come into contact with. (10)

In compliance with SB20-217 and HB21-1250 in years 2022, 2023, and 2024, those same line-item costs totaled the department \$577,901, \$735,156, and \$755,867 for their respective years. (11)

Weld County, reportedly, is working on a new contract with a different provider, which will cost them right under \$1 million in the first year and will total \$1.3 million by the 10th year. (11)

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Contract	91,800	91,800	291,800	403,542	403,542	1,282,484
BWC techs (x3)			172,312	228,852	241,365	642,529
Software	3,383	3,383	11,844	18,990	22,320	59,920
Training & other operating costs	35,050	50,194	101,945	83,772	88,640	359,601
Total						2,344,534

Weld County was able to offset the initial rollout costs of the body-worn cameras program with a grant from the 2020-2021 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant for \$200,00. (11)

According to the Sheriff's Office, Weld County, to date, has not received any monies appropriated from either SB20-217 or HB21-1250, including the Body Worn Camera Fund. (11)



A report published earlier this year by the Advance Colorado Institute went into depth on unfunded mandates via body cameras, and found that counties are incurring exorbitant costs due to legislation regarding body cameras. (11)

Body camera mandates for Weld County, for example, cost the county a total of \$2,344,534 for five years of compliance. (11)

Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office hired 17 new staff members and spent over \$2.5 million in the first year alone to comply with body camera mandates. (11)

Park County Sheriff's Office reported needing \$500,000 to cover the cost of compliance with body camera mandates. (11)

House Bill 21-1236: "State Information Technology"

HB 21-1236 requires local governments to comply with the standards set by the State Office of Information Technology on the dissemination of and access to public information. (12)

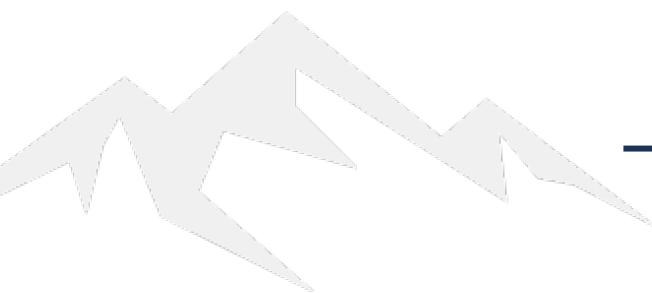
While the fiscal note claimed that the expenditures by the State and local governments for the implementation of IT infrastructure standards would be minimal, counties include this bill as an example of an unfunded mandate that has affected their budgets. (13)

State Expenditures

Workload may increase in state agencies to update information technology protocols and address reporting requirements. Workload may also be reallocated if OIT delegates any functions to a state agency; the fiscal note assumes that such delegation will occur minimally. Finally, workload will increase in the Department of State to serve on the Colorado Cybersecurity Council. These workload impacts are expected to be minimal, and no change in appropriations is required for any state agency.

Local Government

Workload may minimally increase in some local governments to participate on the Colorado Cybersecurity Council. Workload may also increase to facilitate risk assessments with OIT.



These heavy-handed requirements by the State on local governments have resulted in high costs to county and municipal budgets. Counties are now pushing back on this practice, demanding that the State follow the law regarding unfunded mandates and end the practice of imposing requirements without providing the funding to carry them out.

Local Control and the Housing Battle

Governor Polis has repeatedly blamed local governments for standing in the way of development, but laws signed by the Governor that include unfunded mandates are causing a diminished supply of affordable and attainable housing.

These new housing laws affect residential occupancy limits, accessory dwelling units, transit-oriented communities, and manufactured homes.

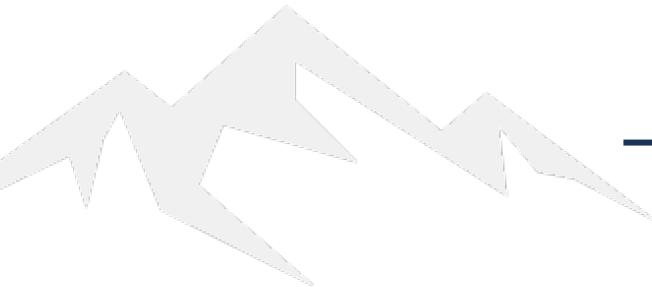
On May 19, 2025, CBS News reported that the Governor signed an Executive Order to track cities and counties not complying with the new housing laws. (14) The specific laws include HB24-1007, HB24-1152, HB24-1304, HB24-1313, SB24-174, HB25-1273, and SB25-002. (15)

CBS reported that, per the Executive Order, local governments that are not in compliance risk losing at least \$100 million annually in State funding. (14)

Westminster Mayor Nancy McNally responded to Governor Polis's Executive Order, saying, "We don't need the state telling us what to do when, in the [state] Constitution, it states that it is our job." The Westminster City Council has "directed staff not to comply with certain laws," but under the new Executive Order, Westminster is now at risk of losing state funding. (14)

The Colorado Sun reported on October 7, 2025, that cities across the State are not in compliance and risk losing \$280 million in State grants. These cities include Arvada, Aurora, Castle Pines, Centennial, Cherry Hills Village, Glendale, Greenwood Village, Lone Tree, Thornton, Firestone, Palmer Lake, Lafayette, and Westminster. (16)

Rachel Kuroiwa, speaking for the City of Arvada, argued that, "Despite these efforts, the executive order punishes municipalities deemed 'noncompliant'



by withholding the very grant funding needed to build affordable housing, expand clean energy infrastructure, and improve alternative transportation,’ and that, ‘This order not only undermines local governance but also delays progress toward the shared objectives we all support. It is an overreach of his constitutional authority.’” (17)

Aurora Mayor Mike Coffman argued similarly:

“Threatening to withhold or otherwise deprioritize critical funding from communities that dare question the constitutionality of state policies is wrong... Aurora is one of six metro cities currently suing the governor and state for willfully and recklessly violating our right to home rule – a principle guaranteed under the Colorado constitution that firmly establishes the right for local decisions like zoning to be made at the local level, not the state level.” (16)

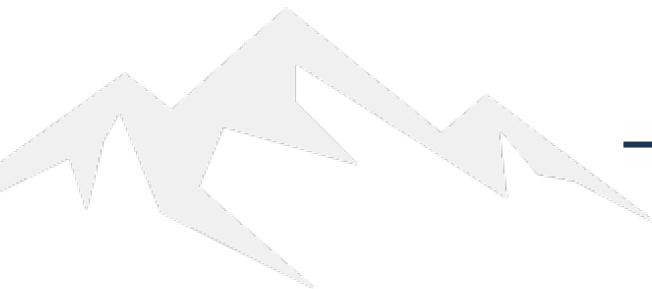
Counties Bear the Cost

Rural Colorado: Prowers County

Prowers County recently passed a Resolution against several State laws. First, Prowers County explained that the implementation of the Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code (“CWRC”) includes an estimated cost of \$150,000 in start-up costs and annual costs of \$85,000 per year. (See Appendix)

In rural Southeastern Colorado, it can be incredibly difficult to find staff, and in order to implement the CWRC, Prowers County would have to start a Code Compliance Department to update current codes or create new codes.

The Prowers County Resolution points out that adding additional regulations on development will “impede their ability to construct affordable and attainable housing within Prowers County.” (See Appendix) More unfunded mandates on counties will increase the cost of construction, as such costs are often passed on to developers and then, ultimately, the consumers.



Grand County

Grand County's letter to leaders of the State highlighted SB 25-003, a controversial gun bill that tasked local governments with administering a permit system, training oversight, and background checks, as an unfunded mandate that will cost the county an additional \$130,000 annually. (See Appendix)

Logan County

Logan County's letter to the State emphasized a proposed rulemaking by the Colorado Air Quality Control Commission concerning methane gas emissions for landfills.

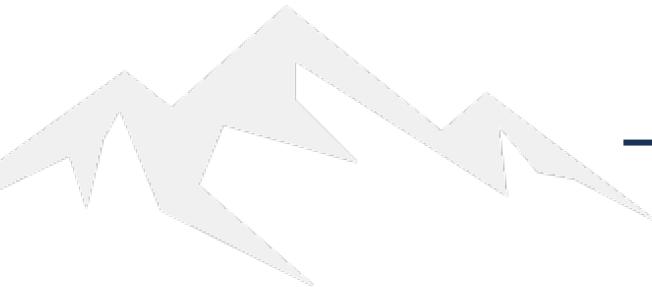
"Estimated first year costs of the proposed rules are more than \$3 million dollars. Our property tax revenue this year is slightly less than \$12 million dollars. If passed, the State would be asking us to spend one quarter of our tax revenue on one item. This does not include recurring costs related to these rules in the years moving forward." (See Appendix)

The one-size-fits-all approach mandated by the State is not feasible in many counties across Colorado, especially in rural counties across Colorado, where needs differ significantly based on geography and population. Many of the regulations also damage counties' ability to become or remain business-friendly or to build housing.

Suburban & Urban Colorado: Boulder County

Boulder County, in its letter to the State, reported that the county will be in a structural deficit heading into fiscal year 2026, saying, "Increases in state funding have not been commensurate with the increasing demand for services, and state funding has even been cut in recent years to key areas that impact the county, including transportation funding." (See Appendix)(18)

Boulder County highlighted HB 22-1063, which deals with jail standards, as a measure that is projected to cost the county approximately \$1.3 million.



Boulder County also highlighted HB 21-1110, which concerns website accessibility, as another unfunded mandate. (See Appendix)

Summit County

Summit County also joined the effort to address unfunded mandates. Summit County's letter highlighted Regulation 31, saying, "One recent example is the CDPHE landfill methane regulations (Regulation 31) alone would cost Summit \$5 million up front plus \$1 million annually." (See Appendix)

Pueblo County

Pueblo County, uniquely, also pointed out in its letter that funding from the Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF) has been "redirected to other priorities, not roads – roads are crumbling." Pueblo County also mentioned SB 22-230, a law concerning collective bargaining for counties, as a recent mandate that has caused "substantial, uncompensated costs..." (See Appendix)

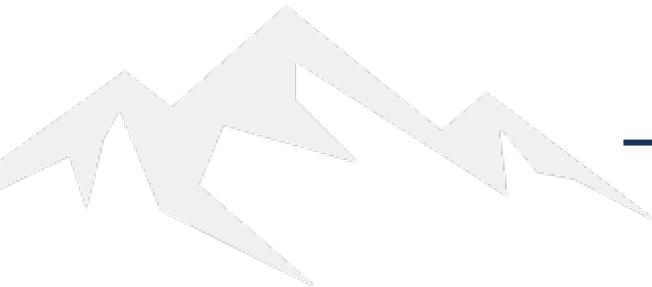
Backed by the Law

Colorado counties are uniting and pushing back against unfunded mandates by invoking Colorado Revised Statutes 29-1-304.5(1), which states:

"[N]o new state mandate or an increase in the level of service for an existing state mandate beyond the existing level of service required by law shall be mandated by the general assembly or any state agency on any local government unless the state provides additional moneys to reimburse such local government for the costs of such new state mandate or such increased level of service. In the event that such additional moneys for reimbursement are not provided, such mandate or increased level of service for an existing state mandate shall be optional on the part of the local government." (19)

Colorado Counties Inc.'s 2026 Policy Statement

Colorado Counties, Inc. – which represents all 64 counties statewide – included the issue of unfunded mandates in their 2026 Policy Statement.



One provision of the Statement proclaims that “CCI strongly supports the provision of adequate state funding for any future state or federally imposed mandates upon local government, including the need for technology improvements necessary to fulfill these mandates.” (See Appendix)

The law cited by Colorado Counties, Inc., makes it clear that counties and municipalities are not required to comply with State mandates if the State fails to provide adequate funding. If the State views funding as optional, the law says that the local governments can view the mandate as optional.

Conclusion

The dozens of counties sending letters to Governor Polis and the Democratic leadership in the House and Senate are proposing a solution: increased collaboration between the State and their county partners, especially when legislation is proposed that will force counties to implement or comply with levels of service that are not sustainable.

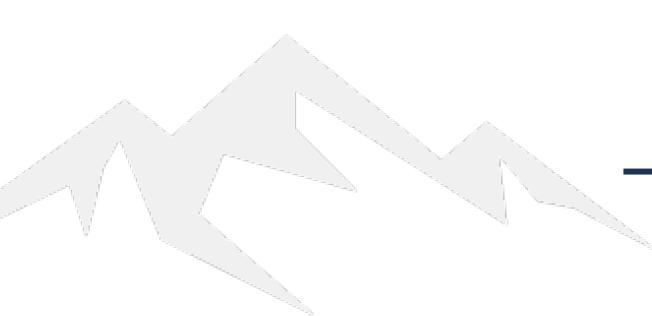
Counties are advocating for increased fairness and awareness of the financial burdens placed on them when unfunded State mandates are imposed. This can look like requiring accurate fiscal notes that include the cost to local governments before legislation passes, attaching funding for new or expanded mandates – as State law requires –, and recognizing that mandates affect counties differently depending on size, geography, population, and resources, and that “one size fits all” legislation is often unrealistic.

With limited funding and ever-increasing unfunded mandates, counties must choose which services they can afford to provide while maintaining their constitutionally required obligation to have a balanced budget.



Works Cited

1. Sieg, Stina. "Mesa County pushes back on what it says are unfair, expensive mandates from the state." *CPR News*, 18 August 2025, <https://www.cpr.org/2025/08/18/mesa-county-unfunded-state-mandates-pushback/>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
2. "Commissioner Daniel updates residents on unfunded mandates." *Mesa County*, 29 September 2025, <https://www.mesacounty.us/news/commissioners/commissioner-daniel-updates-residents-unfunded-mandates>. Accessed 12 December 2025.
3. "SB23-166 Establishment Of A Wildfire Resiliency Code Board." *Colorado General Assembly*, <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-166>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
4. "Final Fiscal Note: SB 23-166." *Legislative Council Staff*, 7 August 2023, <https://s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/beta.leg.colorado.gov/ec607b768a9a11bd92199d900e65b928>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
5. "SB 24-005 Prohibit Landscaping Practices for Water Conservation." *Colorado General Assembly*, <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb24-005>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
6. "Final Fiscal Note: SB 24-005." *Legislative Council Staff*, 3 June 2024, <https://s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/beta.leg.colorado.gov/a0cf5fb2eca151b21135cc74b296a71b>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
7. "HB21-1286 Energy Performance for Buildings." *Colorado General Assembly*, <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb21-1286>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
8. Weiser, Scott. "Colorado and Denver sued for allegedly violating federal laws on large-building energy standards." *The Denver Gazette*, 24 April 2024, <https://www.denvergazette.com/2024/04/24/colorado-and-denver-sued-for-allegedly-violating-federal-laws-on-large-building-energy-standards-5a0aac18-0275-11ef-a472-638a411da61d>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
9. "Final Fiscal Note: HB 21-1286." *Legislative Council Staff*, 29 July 2021, <https://s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/beta.leg.colorado.gov/9c7e70dc153595e8c4785c1c2dc69d5>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.



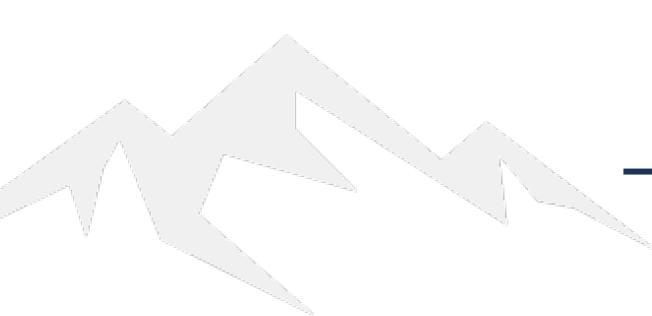
10. "HB21-1250 Measures to Address Law Enforcement Accountability." *Colorado General Assembly*, <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb21-1250>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
11. Tsogt, Michael, and Rose Pugliese. "Unfunded Mandates: The Hidden Costs of Body Camera Compliance for Local Law Enforcement." *Advance Colorado Institute*, March 2025, <https://www.advancecolorado.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Unfunded-Mandates.-Body-Cameras.-FINAL.pdf>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
12. "HB21-1236 State Information Technology." *Colorado General Assembly*, <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb21-1236>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
13. "Final Fiscal Note: HB 21-1236." *Legislative Council Staff*, 24 June 2021, <https://s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/beta.leg.colorado.gov/53cee2c7e7c22ec3a2423826937a359e>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
14. Boyd, Shaun. "Colorado governor threatens to withhold grants from cities that don't comply with housing laws." *CBS News*, 20 May 2025, <https://www.cbsnews.com/colorado/news/colorado-governor-threatens-withhold-grants-cities-dont-comply-housing-laws/>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
15. "Governor Polis Takes Action to Increase Housing Supply, Break Down Barriers to More Housing Coloradans Can Afford." *Colorado Governor Jared Polis*, 16 May 2025, <https://governorsoffice.colorado.gov/governor/news/governor-polis-takes-action-increase-housing-supply-break-down-barriers-more-housing>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
16. Paul, Jesse. "These 14 Colorado cities aren't complying with state housing laws. It could cost them \$280M in grants." *The Colorado Sun*, 7 October 2025, <https://coloradosun.com/2025/10/07/colorado-housing-laws-state-grants/>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
17. Slay, Elizabeth. "Colorado cities weigh impact, question strategy of state threat to withhold housing funds." *Homes*, 20 August 2025, <https://www.homes.com/news/colorado-cities-weigh-impact-question-strategy-of-state-threat-to-withhold-housing-funds/423651789/>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.
18. Jennerjahn, Allie. "Colorado counties voice concerns to Gov. Polis over how to implement 'unfunded mandates.'" *Denver 7*, 3 November 2025, <https://www.denver7.com/news/politics/colorado-counties-voice->



[concerns-to-gov-polis-over-how-to-implement-unfunded-mandates.](#)

Last Accessed 12 December 2025.

19. "C.R.S. 29-1-304.5." *FindLaw*, <https://codes.findlaw.com/co/title-29-government-local/co-rev-st-sect-29-1-304-5/>. Last Accessed 12 December 2025.



Appendix

- ◆ **Page 17: Archuleta County** – “Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded Mandates”
- ◆ **Page 19: Bent County** – “Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates”
- ◆ **Page 21: Boulder County** – Letter Regarding Unfunded Mandates
- ◆ **Page 23: Crowley County** – Resolution “Opposing Unfunded State Mandates And Affirming Local Control Pursuant to C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5”
- ◆ **Page 25: Delta County** – “Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates”
- ◆ **Page 27: Garfield County** – “Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates”
- ◆ **Page 29: Grand County** – “Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates”
- ◆ **Page 31: La Plata County** – Letter Regarding Unfunded Mandates
- ◆ **Page 33: Logan County** – “Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates”
- ◆ **Page 35: Mesa County** – “Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates”
- ◆ **Page 37: Montezuma County** – “Unfunded State Mandates”
- ◆ **Page 39: Prowers County** – “Unfunded State Mandates”
- ◆ **Page 41: Prowers County** – “Resolution Declaring Non-Implementation of the Colorado Wildlife Resiliency Code Based on the Unfunded Mandates Statute”
- ◆ **Page 43: Pueblo County** – “Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates”
- ◆ **Page 45: Rio Grande County** – “Local Control and Fiscal Responsibility Related to State Mandates”
- ◆ **Page 47: Saguache County** – “Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates”
- ◆ **Page 49: Summit County** – Letter Regarding Unfunded Mandates
- ◆ **Page 51: Teller County** – “Protecting Local Control & Fiscal Responsibility: Teller County’s Position on Unfunded State Mandates”
- ◆ **Page 53: Colorado Counties, Inc. 2026 Policy Statement** (Pages 1-6)
 - Full Statement:

<https://ccionline.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/2026-Policy-Statement.pdf>



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ARCHULETA COUNTY, COLORADO

P.O. Box 1507 / 398 Lewis Street / Pagosa Springs, Colorado 81147
Tel (970) 264-8300

August 5, 2025

The Honorable Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado
136 State Capital
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable James Coleman
President, Colorado Senate
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Julie McCluskie
Speaker, Colorado House of Representatives
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie:

We, the undersigned Chairs of Boards of County Commissioners from across Colorado-and from both sides of the political aisle-write with a shared concern: the increasing number of unfunded mandates imposed by the State on Colorado's counties. These unfunded mandates, issued without the financial support required to implement them, place an unsustainable burden on local governments and the citizens we serve and undermining both fiscal responsibility and the principle of local control.

Colorado Revised Statutes§ 29-1-304.5 plainly states that when the State increases the level of service required by law, it must also provide adequate funding. If it does not, such mandates are not binding-they are optional. As elected officials representing communities of diverse political perspectives, we are united in our commitment to uphold this statutory protection and exercise it with discretion.

August 5, 2025
Page 2

Recent mandates that are estimated to result in substantial, uncompensated costs include:

- SB23-166 & SB24-005: Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code
- HB21-1286: Energy Benchmarking & Building Performance Standards
- HB21-1250: Demographic and Contact Reporting
- HB21-1236: Colorado OIT Compliance

Summaries of each of these mandates, with the estimated costs to Archuleta County, as an example, are enclosed. They require counties to dedicate staff time, upgrade systems, or implement new procedures-none of which come with state funding.

We respectfully urge the General Assembly to reconsider the volume and scope of unfunded mandates. Additionally, we urge Governor Polis to exercise his veto power over unfunded mandates. We ask for an open dialogue on solutions, including funding mechanisms or revisions to the statutory frameworks requiring compliance.

Finally, we are instructing our respective staff to begin treating those unfunded mandates listed above, as optional pursuant to C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5(1). It is our sincere hope that this does not lead to unnecessary litigation, however, our County Attorneys are prepared to defend our exercise of statutory remedies if necessary.

This is not a symbolic gesture. It is a deliberate and lawful step rooted in the statute.

We remain committed to collaboration and problem-solving. However, we also recognize that the tension between state directive and local autonomy may, at times, require clarity from the courts. If that clarification becomes necessary, we are prepared to stand behind our interpretation and execution of the law.

Counties continue to be indispensable partners in delivering essential services across Colorado. We invite you to join us in a candid conversation about the true cost of these mandates and the path forward. Our offices stand ready to coordinate a meeting at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Veronia Medina
Chair



Bent County Board of County Commissioners

July 29, 2025

The Honorable Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado
136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable James Coleman
President, Colorado Senate
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Julie McCluskie
Speaker, Colorado House of Representatives
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie:

We, the undersigned Chairs of Boards of County Commissioners from across Colorado, and from both sides of the political aisle, write with a shared concern: the increasing number of unfunded mandates imposed by the State on Colorado's counties. These **unfunded mandates**, issued without the financial support required to implement them, place an unsustainable burden on local governments and the citizens we serve and undermine both fiscal responsibility and the principle of local control.

C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5 plainly states that when the State increases the level of service required by law, it must also provide adequate funding. If it does not, such mandates are not binding—they are optional. As elected officials representing communities of diverse political perspectives, we are united in our commitment to uphold this statutory protection and exercise it with discretion.

Recent mandates that are estimated to result in substantial, uncompensated costs include:

- **SB23-166 and SB24-005: Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code**
- **HB21-1286: Energy Benchmarking and Building Performance Standards**
- **HB21-1250: Demographic and Contact Reporting**
- **HB21-1236: Colorado OIT Compliance**

Summaries of each of these mandates, with the estimated costs to Mesa County, as an example, are enclosed. They require all counties to dedicate staff time, upgrade systems, or implement new procedures, none of which come with state funding.

We respectfully urge the General Assembly to reconsider the volume and scope of **unfunded mandates**. Additionally, we urge Governor Polis to exercise his veto power over unfunded mandates. We ask for an open dialogue on solutions, including funding mechanisms or revisions to the statutory frameworks requiring compliance.

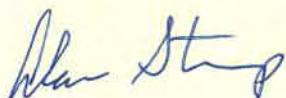
Finally, we are instructing our respective staff to begin treating those unfunded mandates listed above as optional pursuant to C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5(1). It is our sincere hope that this does not lead to unnecessary litigation.

This is not a symbolic gesture. It is a deliberate and lawful step rooted in the statute.

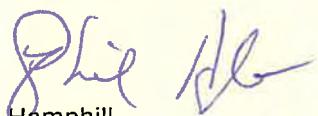
We remain committed to collaboration and problem-solving. However, we also recognize that the tension between state directives and local autonomy may, at times, require clarity from the courts. If that clarification becomes necessary, we are prepared to stand behind our interpretation and execution of the law.

Counties continue to be indispensable partners in delivering essential services across Colorado. We invite you to join us in a candid conversation about the true cost of these mandates and the path forward. Our offices stand ready to coordinate a meeting at your convenience.

Respectfully,



Alan Stump
Chair, Bent County Board of Commissioners



Phil Hemphill
Vice Chair, Bent County Board of Commissioners



Jennifer Scofield
Commissioner, Bent County Board of Commissioners

Dear Representatives and Senators,

Your work at the legislature is intricately tied to the work we do in Boulder County, and we are thankful for the opportunity to collaborate with you in service to the communities of Boulder County.

As statutory subdivisions of the state, counties are the face of government services in Colorado. Boulder County provides support services for people in need, connection to preventative health care, public safety and emergency response support, access to local public lands, and so much more. We appreciate your efforts in support of Boulder County priorities and seek to strengthen our partnership with you regarding fiscal constraints at the state and local level to address shared priorities in advance of the 2026 Legislative Session.

With the current state budget crisis and federal budget cuts, we hold deep concerns about the fiscal impacts of future state legislation. Boulder County is facing a challenging fiscal situation heading into this next budget cycle. Counties differ from cities in that we do not have as many options to raise revenue; we do not have authority to request voter approval of any new tax, unless that authority is conferred to counties by the legislature. Boulder County's revenue currently comes from three sources: property taxes, voter-approved sales taxes, and state and federal transfers.

Unfortunately, Boulder County will be in a structural deficit moving into fiscal year 2026. Increases in state funding have not been commensurate with the increasing demand for services, and state funding has even been cut in recent years to key areas that impact the county, including transportation funding. Examples of legislation passed, without adequate funding, that counties are required to implement include:

- **Jail Standards:** Boulder County supported HB22-1063 Jail Standards Commission, yet the subsequent legislation passed to implement jail standards did not provide adequate funding to implement these standards and could increase costs to Boulder County by approximately \$1.3 million.
- **Human Services:** Colorado has chronically underfunded safety net programs, mental and behavioral health services, and the child welfare system – all compounding to create immense challenges for people in Colorado with the greatest needs. For example, the lack of adequate state funding to keep up with the wages for people administering SNAP, Medicaid, and other public benefits, means it is difficult to recruit and retain people with the technology, policy, and people skills necessary to ensure Coloradans who are eligible for public benefits receive and retain their benefits.
- **Website Accessibility:** Boulder County believes strongly that all services, including web services should be accessible to all and did not oppose HB21-1110; however the bill did not include funding to implement the law. In order to implement HB21-1110, Boulder County hired a web accessibility coordinator and funded the training of staff to meet the bill's requirements.

Counties are the backbone of Colorado's public service systems. While we support the priorities and goals in many bills under consideration by the Colorado General Assembly, additional local government funding for implementation must come along with any mandate. Again, we appreciate our partnership with you and look forward to continued conversations as you draft and review legislation for the upcoming 2026 state legislative session to find the most cost-efficient and effective ways to serve our shared constituents.

Sincerely,

Claire Levy
Marta Loachamin
Ashley Stolzmann

Boulder County Board of Commissioners

CC Governor Jared Polis

STATE OF COLORADO)
) ss.
County of Crowley)

At a Regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners for Crowley County, Colorado, held at the Crowley County Administration Office in Ordway, Colorado, on Monday, the 18th day of August, A.D. 2025, there were present:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Roy Elliott,	Chairman
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Terry McMillian,	Commissioner
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vicki Powell,	Commissioner
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	LaShelle Benbow,	Clerk to the Board

when the following proceedings, among others, were had and done, to-wit:

RESOLUTION #

2025-9331

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CROWLEY COUNTY, COLORADO, OPPOSING UNFUNDED STATE MANDATES AND AFFIRMING LOCAL CONTROL PURSUANT TO C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5

WHEREAS, unfunded mandates imposed by the State of Colorado place an unsustainable fiscal burden on counties and the citizens they serve; and

WHEREAS, Colorado Revised Statutes § 29-1-304.5 provide that when the State increases the level of service required by law it must also provide adequate funding, and if it does not the mandate is optional; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners believes that honoring this statute protects local taxpayers, upholds the principle of local control, and preserves essential public services; and

WHEREAS, county officials across Colorado have called upon the Governor and General Assembly to reconsider the volume and scope of unfunded mandates and to engage in an open dialogue on sustainable solutions; and

WHEREAS, Crowley County remains committed to collaborating with state leadership while safeguarding its financial integrity and statutory authority.

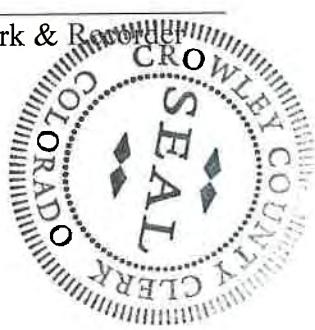
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CROWLEY COUNTY, COLORADO, THAT:

1. **Opposition to unfunded mandates.** Crowley County formally opposes any state law, rule, or executive action that imposes new duties on counties without providing full funding to implement those duties.
2. **Affirmation of statutory rights.** In accordance with C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5, Crowley County affirms that unfunded mandates are considered optional unless and until adequate state funding is provided. County staff are directed to evaluate such mandates and implement them only when state funding is sufficient.
3. **Advocacy for statutory compliance.** The Board urges the Governor and General Assembly to honor the funding requirements of C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5 and to consult counties early in the legislative process to avoid future unfunded mandates.

Adopted the 18th day of August 2025.

ATTEST:

Mel Carter
Melinda Carter, Clerk & Recorder



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
CROWLEY COUNTY, STATE OF
COLORADO:

Roy Elliott
Roy Elliott, Chairman

Terry McMillian
Terry McMillian

Vicki Powell
Vicki Powell



August 19, 2025

The Honorable Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado
136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable James Coleman
President, Colorado Senate
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Julie McCluskie
Speaker, Colorado House of Representatives
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie:

We, the undersigned Chairs of Boards of County Commissioners from across Colorado—and from both sides of the political aisle—write with a shared concern: the increasing number of unfunded mandates imposed by the State on Colorado's counties. These unfunded mandates, issued without the financial support required to implement them, place an unsustainable burden on local governments and the citizens we serve and undermining both fiscal responsibility and the principle of local control.

Colorado Revised Statutes § 29-1-304.5 plainly states that when the State increases the level of service required by law, it must also provide adequate funding. If it does not, such mandates are not binding—they are optional. As elected officials representing communities of diverse political perspectives, we are united in our commitment to uphold this statutory protection and exercise it with discretion.

Recent mandates that are estimated to result in substantial, uncompensated costs include:

- **SB23-166 & SB24-005: Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code**
- **HB21-1286: Energy Benchmarking & Building Performance Standards**
- **HB21-1250: Demographic and Contact Reporting**



- **HB21-1236: Colorado OIT Compliance**

This legislation requires counties to dedicate staff time, upgrade systems, or implement new procedures—none of which come with state funding.

We respectfully urge the General Assembly to reconsider the volume and scope of **unfunded mandates**. Additionally, we urge Governor Polis to exercise his veto power over unfunded mandates. We ask for an open dialogue on solutions, including funding mechanisms or revisions to the statutory frameworks requiring compliance.

Finally, we are instructing our respective staff to begin treating those unfunded mandates listed above, as optional pursuant to C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5(1). It is our sincere hope that this does not lead to unnecessary litigation, however, our County Attorneys are prepared to defend our exercise of statutory remedies if necessary.

This is not a symbolic gesture. It is a deliberate and lawful step rooted in the statute.

We remain committed to collaboration and problem-solving. However, we also recognize that the tension between state directive and local autonomy may, at times, require clarity from the courts. If that clarification becomes necessary, we are prepared to stand behind our interpretation and execution of the law.

Counties continue to be indispensable partners in delivering essential services across Colorado. We invite you to join us in a candid conversation about the true cost of these mandates—and the path forward. Our offices stand ready to coordinate a meeting at your convenience.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wendell A. Koontz".

Wendell Koontz
Chair, Board of County Commissioners

Tom Jankovsky, Chair

District 1

Perry Will, Chair Pro Tem

District 2

Mike Samson

District 3



July 21, 2025

The Honorable Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado
136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable James Coleman
President, Colorado Senate
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Julie McCluskie
Speaker, Colorado House of Representatives
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie:

The Garfield County Board of County Commissioners joins many of our fellow Commissioners as members in the Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado (AGNC) and around the State of Colorado to voice our shared concern: the increasing number of unfunded mandates imposed by the State on Colorado's counties.

These **unfunded mandates**, issued without the financial support required to implement them, place an unsustainable burden on local governments and the citizens we serve and undermining both fiscal responsibility and the principle of local control.

Colorado Revised Statutes § 29-1-304.5 plainly states that when the State increases the level of service required by law, it must also provide adequate funding. If it does not, such mandates are not binding - they are optional. As elected officials representing communities of diverse political perspectives, we are united in our commitment to uphold this statutory protection and exercise it with discretion.

These unfunded mandates require counties to dedicate staff time, upgrade systems, or implement new procedures—none of which come with state funding.

We respectfully urge the General Assembly to reconsider the volume and scope of **unfunded mandates**. Additionally, we urge Governor Polis to exercise his veto power over unfunded mandates. We join our colleagues in asking for an open dialogue on solutions, including funding mechanisms or revisions to the statutory frameworks requiring compliance.

Counties continue to be indispensable partners in delivering essential services across Colorado. We invite you to join us in a candid conversation about the true cost of these mandates—and the path forward. Our offices are ready to coordinate a meeting at your convenience.

Respectfully,


Tom Jankovsky, Chairman


Mike Samson, Commissioner


Perry Will, Commissioner

cc Fred Jarman, County Manager
 Heather Beattie, County Attorney



Grand County BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Colorado

308 Byers Ave., P.O. Box 264 | Hot Sulphur Springs, CO 80451 | 970-725-3347

Edward F. Raegner

District 1, Fraser 80442

Merrit S. Linke

District 2, Granby 80446

Randal F. George

District 3, Kremmling 80459

Email: grndcty1@co.grand.co.us

Phone: 970-725-3100

Edward Moyer

County Manager

Maxine LaBarre-Krostue

County Attorney

August 12, 2025

The Honorable Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado 136
State Capital
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable James Coleman
President, Colorado Senate
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Julie McCluskie
Speaker, Colorado House of Representatives
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie:

The Grand County Board of County Commissioners would like to express its support for the bipartisan effort to address the increasing number of unfunded mandates imposed by the State on Colorado's counties, as outlined in the July 29, 2025 letter from the Mesa County Board of County Commissioners. We share the concern that these mandates, which lack the necessary financial support for implementation, place an unsustainable burden on local governments and the citizens they serve.

Per Colorado Revised Statutes § 29-1-304.5, the State shall not increase the level of service required by law without also providing adequate funding. If funding is not provided, such mandates are not binding - - they are optional. As elected officials, we are committed to upholding this statutory protection and believe it is essential for maintaining fiscal responsibility and the principle of local control.

The many recent mandates outlined by Mesa County are estimated to result in substantial, uncompensated costs to Grand County. They require counties to hire additional staff, upgrade systems, or implement new procedures-none of which come with state funding.

As an example, with the recent unfunded mandate associated with Senate Bill 25-003 (specified semiautomatic firearms and rapid-fire devices), our Sheriff's Office is now tasked with administering a permit system, training oversight and background check that will cost our tax payers an estimated additional \$130,000 annually. Rural counties simply do not have the same budget capacity as the larger metropolitan counties. Any unfunded State mandate is a significant budget impact.

We join in the call for the General Assembly to reconsider the volume and scope of unfunded mandates and respectfully urge you to exercise your veto power, as Governor, over such mandates. We are also instructing our staff to begin treating the unfunded mandates as optional, pursuant to C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5(1). While we hope to avoid litigation, our County Attorneys are prepared to defend our use of these statutory remedies if necessary.

We believe that counties are indispensable partners in delivering essential services across Colorado. We stand united with counties across Colorado on potential solutions, including revisions to statutory frameworks or new funding mechanisms. We look forward to having a meeting with open dialogue and candid conversations about the true cost of these mandates and the path forward.

Sincerely,



Randal F. George
Commissioner, Chair



Edward Raegner
Commissioner



Merrit Linke
Commissioner



September 23, 2025

Hon. Jared Polis, Governor of Colorado
James Coleman, President, Colorado General Assembly
Julie McCluskie, Speaker of the House, Colorado General Assembly

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie:

The La Plata County Board of County Commissioners shares the concerns of many of our peers on both sides of the political aisle regarding an increase in unfunded mandates imposed by the State Legislature that negatively impacts Colorado's counties.

While we acknowledge the budgetary challenges facing the State of Colorado, many of Colorado's counties face an even more dire economic environment. Unfunded mandates only exacerbate the financial struggles of local governments like La Plata County, where we estimate a deficit impact of at least \$8 million for 2026.

Recent examples of these unfunded mandates include:

- SB23-166 & SB24-005: Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code
- HB21-1286: Energy Benchmarking & Building Performance Standards
- HB21-1250: Demographic and Contact Reporting
- HB21-1236: Colorado OIT Compliance
- HB21-1110: Digital Accessibility

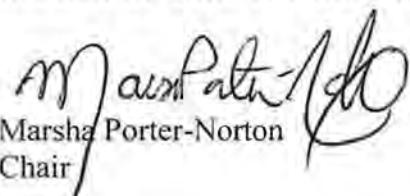
These bills are very well-intentioned and, in some cases, the La Plata County Commissioners publicly supported them – and would again. They represent positive impacts for many Colorado and La Plata County residents. However, taken together with residential assessment rates being cut, inflation and other local factors such as a decline in our oil and gas revenue, these mandates have placed an untenable and unsustainable financial burden on La Plata County.

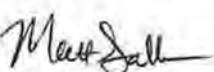
We respectfully urge the General Assembly to consider the volume and scope of legislated programs imposed on counties and the related impacts of new bills that do not come with associated funding mechanisms. We cannot be forced to continue further cutting our core programs and services – the majority of which were previously mandated by the State – to enact any new mandates. We desire that every bill introduced carries a note that specifies the cost to local governments.

We welcome the opportunity to participate in discussions to find solutions to these challenges, as all of us, at the county and state level, have an obligation to provide the best services and support we can provide for our citizens with the greatest fiscal efficiency. Thank you for your consideration and all the work that you do on behalf of the people of Colorado.

Sincerely,

LA PLATA COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Marsha Porter-Norton
Chair


Matt Salka
Vice Chair

Absent

Elizabeth Philbrick
Commissioner

cc: Sen. Cleave Simpson & Rep. Katie Stewart



September 11, 2025

The Honorable Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado
136 State Capital
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable James Coleman
President, Colorado Senate
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Julie McCluskie
Speaker, Colorado House of Representatives
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, Co 80203

Re: Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie:

We, the undersigned Commissioners of Logan County Colorado, are writing to you with concern about unfunded mandates imposed on our County by the State Legislature and appointed boards commissioned by the Legislature on Colorado's Counties. These mandates are placing an unsustainable burden on Logan County that endangers our ability to provide all the necessary services for which our County is responsible. We work very hard to be fiscally responsible to our taxpayers and have limited ability to generate more income to cover all the services the County provides.

Colorado Revised Statutes § 29-1-304.5 plainly states that when the State increases the level of service required by law, it must also provide adequate funding. If it does not, such mandates are not binding – they are optional. As elected officials representing Logan County, we are committed to uphold this statutory protection and exercise it when needed.

Recent mandates that are estimated to result in substantial, uncompensated costs include:

- **SB23-166: and SB24-005: Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code**
- **HB21-1286: Energy Benchmarking and Building Performance Standards**
- **HB21-1250: Demographic and Contract Reporting**
- **HB-21-1236: Colorado OIT Compliance**

The pieces of legislation listed above require counties to dedicate staff time to upgrade systems or implement new procedures – none of which come with state funding.

The Honorable Jared Polis
The Honorable James Coleman
The Honorable Julie McCluskie
September 11, 2025 Page 2

We in Logan County are particularly concerned with proposed rulemaking by the Colorado Air Quality Control Commission related to methane gas emissions for landfills. Estimated first year costs of the proposed rules are more than \$3 million dollars. Our property tax revenue this year is slightly less than \$12 million dollars. If passed, the State would be asking us to spend one quarter of our tax revenue on one item. This does not include recurring costs related to these rules in the years moving forward. Increase tipping fees to recover these costs in a small rural landfill would be prohibitively expensive and leave County Residents with no viable options. If this is a priority for the State of Colorado, then the funds to enact these rules should be provided by the State.

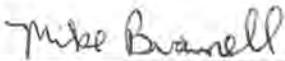
As Commissioners, we respect and recognize the authority of you, our elected leaders, to create and enact legislation. We are asking that you recognize and work to rectify unfunded mandates that might be imposed when proposing new legislation. If an issue is important enough to go through the legislative process, then the funds needed to implement the programs created by the legislation should be provided by the State.

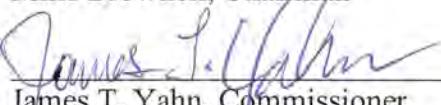
Logan County is prepared to join other counties and municipalities in upholding our rights under CRS § 29-1-304.5. We hope that in calling these matters to your attention we can work in conjunction with the State of Colorado to continue to provide the services that our constituents want, deserve, and need.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LOGAN COUNTY COLORADO



Mike Brownell, Chairman


James T. Yahn, Commissioner


Jim C. Santomaso, Commissioner

/jc



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

District 1 – Cody Davis	970-244-1605
District 2 – Bobbie Daniel	970-244-1604
District 3 – JJ Fletcher	970-244-1606

July 29, 2025

The Honorable Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado
136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable James Coleman
President, Colorado Senate
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Julie McCluskie
Speaker, Colorado House of Representatives
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie:

We, the undersigned Chairs of Boards of County Commissioners from across Colorado—and from both sides of the political aisle—write with a shared concern: the increasing number of unfunded mandates imposed by the State on Colorado’s counties. These **unfunded mandates**, issued without the financial support required to implement them, place an unsustainable burden on local governments and the citizens we serve and undermining both fiscal responsibility and the principle of local control.

Colorado Revised Statutes § 29-1-304.5 plainly states that when the State increases the level of service required by law, it must also provide adequate funding. If it does not, such mandates are not binding—they are optional. As elected officials representing communities of diverse political perspectives, we are united in our commitment to uphold this statutory protection and exercise it with discretion.

Recent mandates that are estimated to result in substantial, uncompensated costs include:

- **SB23-166 & SB24-005: Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code**
- **HB21-1286: Energy Benchmarking & Building Performance Standards**
- **HB21-1250: Demographic and Contact Reporting**
- **HB21-1236: Colorado OIT Compliance**
-

Summaries of each of these mandates, with the estimated costs to Mesa County, as an example, are enclosed. They require counties to dedicate staff time, upgrade systems, or implement new procedures—none of which come with state funding.

We respectfully urge the General Assembly to reconsider the volume and scope of **unfunded mandates**. Additionally, we urge Governor Polis to exercise his veto power over unfunded mandates. We ask for an open dialogue on solutions, including funding mechanisms or revisions to the statutory frameworks requiring compliance.

Finally, we are instructing our respective staff to begin treating those unfunded mandates listed above, as optional pursuant to C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5(1). It is our sincere hope that this does not lead to unnecessary litigation, however, our County Attorneys are prepared to defend our exercise of statutory remedies if necessary.

This is not a symbolic gesture. It is a deliberate and lawful step rooted in the statute.

We remain committed to collaboration and problem-solving. However, we also recognize that the tension between state directive and local autonomy may, at times, require clarity from the courts. If that clarification becomes necessary, we are prepared to stand behind our interpretation and execution of the law.

Counties continue to be indispensable partners in delivering essential services across Colorado. We invite you to join us in a candid conversation about the true cost of these mandates—and the path forward. Our offices stand ready to coordinate a meeting at your convenience.

Respectfully,

Cody Davis
Chair, Board of County Commissioners



County Commissioners:
Jim Candelaria
Gerald Koppenhafer
Kent Lindsay
County Administrator:
Travis Anderson

109 West Main, Room 250
Cortez, CO 81321
(970)565-8317

August 26, 2025

The Honorable Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado 136
State Capital
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable James Coleman
President, Colorado Senate 200
E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Julie McCluskie
Speaker, Colorado House of Representatives
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Unfunded State Mandates

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie:

The Montezuma County Board of County Commissioners respectfully wishes to provide you with this letter regarding the increasing number of unfunded mandates being imposed on local governments by the State of Colorado and bureaucratic agencies of the State Government, such as proposed Rule 31 on County Landfills, as provided by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). Understanding that other County Commissioners have provided similar letters with similar concerns, these increasing unfunded mandates create a financial burden that is not fiscally sustainable and undermines the principle of local control.

Colorado Revised Statutes§ 29-1-304.5 is clear: any new state mandate or increased level of service for an existing state mandate requires additional moneys to reimburse such local governments for the costs of new mandates or increased level of services. If it does not, such mandates shall be optional. As elected officials representing varied political viewpoints, we are united in our commitment to uphold this statutory protection and exercise it with discretion. Many of these unfunded mandates involve:

- SB20-217 Enhanced Law Enforcement Integrity
- HB21-1250 Measures to Address Law Enforcement Accountability
- HB24-1054 Jail Standards

- Proposition 123 – Affordable Housing
- SB25-142 Wildland interface
- HB21-1110 Digital accessibility,
- HB21-1286 Energy performance for buildings.

These unfunded mandates require counties to allocate financial resources in staff time, upgrade systems to include software, enter into contracts for services, and implement procedures and methodologies to comply with the unfunded mandates imposed by the State of Colorado, without funding.

We request that Governor Polis veto any unfunded mandates, and politely request the General Assembly to contemplate future **unfunded mandates**. We request that if the State implements a law with a fiscal note, the State fully fund the mandate. Staff have been directed to treat unfunded mandates as optional according to C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5(1). Our sincere hope that this does not lead to unnecessary litigation; however, our County Attorneys are prepared to defend our exercise of statutory remedies if necessary.

Montezuma County is open to having conversations with solutions, particularly on funding methods. We encourage you to join us, in addition to other Counties across the State, conversation about the fiscal impacts that unfunded mandates have on local governments.

Respectfully,



Jim Candelaria
Chairman



Kent Lindsay
Commissioner



Gerald Koppenhafer
Commissioner



Board of County Commissioners

Prowers County

301 South Main, Suite 215

Lamar, Colorado 81052-2857

(719) 336-8025 FAX: (719) 336-2255

TY HARMON
FIRST DISTRICT

RON COOK
SECOND DISTRICT

ROGER STAGNER
THIRD DISTRICT

September 9, 2025

The Honorable Jared Polis
Office of the Governor
State Capitol Bldg.
200 E. Colfax Ave., Rm. 136,
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable James Coleman
Colorado Senate President
State Capitol Bldg.
200 E. Colfax Ave., Rm. 346,
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Julie McCluskie
Colorado Speaker of the House
State Capitol Bldg.
200 E. Colfax Ave., Rm. 307,
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Unfunded State Mandates

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie,

The Prowers County Boards of County Commissioners write in concern of the continued and increasing number of unfunded mandates imposed by the State on our counties. Our concerns are shared by many other counties that have or will be reaching out to you. These unfunded mandates, issued without the financial support needed, place an unsustainable burden on local governments and the citizens we serve, undermining both fiscal responsibility and the principle of local control.

Over the past several months, we have listened to non-stop harping by State Leadership about their strong opposition to H.R. 1 at the federal level, citing concerns about federal overreach, unfunded mandates, and infringement on state sovereignty. Yet year after year the State of Colorado continues to impose this same kind of overreach, unfunded mandates and disregard for sovereignty on its own county governments.

As you know, mandates of any kind from any level are costly, requiring the dedication of staff-time, upgraded organizational infrastructure, and the implementation of new procedures. Colorado counties take fiscal responsibilities seriously and would like to see the State do the same. We respectfully urge the General Assembly to reconsider the volume and scope of unfunded mandates and we urge Governor Polis to veto unfunded mandates. We ask for an open dialogue on solutions, including funding mechanisms or revisions to the statutory frameworks requiring compliance.

Colorado Revised Statutes§ 29-1-304.5 plainly states that when the State increases the level of service required by law, it must also provide adequate funding. **If it does not, such mandates are not binding-they are optional.**

We are instructing our respective staff to begin treating unfunded mandates, as optional pursuant to state statute. It is our sincere hope that this does not lead to unnecessary litigation, however, our County Attorney is prepared to defend our position. This is not a symbolic gesture. It is a deliberate and lawful step engrained in the statute. We remain committed to collaboration and problem-solving. However, we also recognize that the tension between state directive and local autonomy may, at times, require clarity from the courts. If that clarification becomes necessary, we are prepared to stand behind our interpretation and execution of the law.

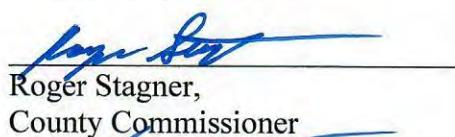
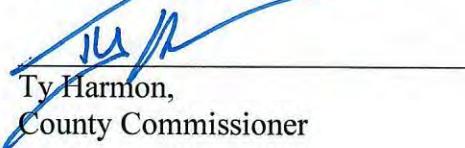
Counties continue to be indispensable partners in delivering essential services across Colorado. We invite you to join us in a candid conversation about the true cost of these mandates-and the path forward. Our offices stand ready to coordinate a meeting at your convenience. Please feel free to contact our office at 719-336-8025.

Sincerely,

PROWERS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Ron Cook,
County Commissioner


Roger Stagner,
County Commissioner
Ty Harmon,
County Commissioner



RESOLUTION DECLARING NON-IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COLORADO WILDFIRE RESILIENCY CODE BASED ON THE UNFUNDED MANDATES STATUTE

Resolution No. 2025- 17

WHEREAS, on September 9, 2025, the Board of County Commissioners of Prowers County, Colorado sent a letter to Governor Polis, Senate President Coleman and House Speaker McCluskie regarding the costs of unfunded mandates on Prowers County; and

WHEREAS, in the 2025 Special Session, State leaders repeatedly denounced potential federal unfunded mandates on the State as they could cause budget shortfalls; and

WHEREAS, unfunded mandates by the State on local governments cause budget shortfalls and decreases in county services; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 23-166 establishes the Wildfire Resiliency Code Board, tasked with the adoption of model codes to be required by governing bodies with jurisdiction in an area within the wildland-urban interface; and

WHEREAS, The Wildfire Resiliency Code Board has adopted the 2025 Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code (CWRC) that requires local governments to adopt codes that meet or exceed the standards set forth in the model codes; and

WHEREAS, implementation of the CWRC is an unfunded mandate on Prowers County, requiring the County to start a new department of Code Compliance, hire staff for said department and create or update building codes that do not currently exist in Prowers County; and

WHEREAS, the cost of implementation of the CWRC is estimated to exceed \$150,000 in start-up costs and costs of \$85,000 annually; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of the CWRC does not align with Prowers County's values of being a business-friendly environment for developers and reducing regulations that impede the ability to construct affordable and attainable housing within Prowers County; and

WHEREAS, implementation of the CWRC violates Prowers County's authority to regulate land use and exercise local control; and

WHEREAS, C.R.S. Section 29-1-304.5(1) states that any unfunded mandate on a local government that is not reimbursed by the State shall be optional for the local government.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

1. The Board of County Commissioners of Prowers County does hereby declare that implementation of the CWRC is an unfunded mandate, which costs are not being reimbursed by the State.
2. The Board of County Commissioners of Prowers County exercises its rights under C.R.S. Section 29-1-304.5(1) to consider implementation of the CWRC optional.
3. The Board of County Commissioners of Prowers County retains its local control authority over land use.
4. The Board of County Commissioners of Prowers County shall not implement the CWRC.
5. The Board of County Commissioner of Prowers County directs staff to send a copy of this Resolution to Governor Polis, Senate President Coleman and House Speaker McCluskie.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Prowers County, Board of County Commissioners, this 28th day of October, 2025.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Ron Cook Ron Cook
County Commissioner

Roger Stagner Roger Stagner
County Commissioner

Ty Harmon Ty Harmon
County Commissioner



Board of County Commissioners

Miles Lucero - District 1

Paula McPheeters - District 2

Zach Swearingen - District 3

August 25, 2025

The Honorable Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado
136 State Capital
Denver, Colorado 80203

The Honorable James Coleman
President, Colorado Senate
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, Colorado 80203

The Honorable Julie McCluskie
Speaker, Colorado House of Representative
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, Colorado 80203

Re: Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie:

We, the undersigned Pueblo Board of County Commissioners, and county commissioners from across Colorado-and from both sides of the political aisle-write with a shared concern: the increasing number of unfunded mandates imposed by the State on Colorado's counties. These unfunded mandates, issued without the financial support required to implement them, place an unsustainable burden on local governments and the citizens we serve and undermine both fiscal responsibility and the principle of local control.

Colorado Revised Statutes § 29-1-304.5 plainly states that when the State increases the level of service required by law, it must also provide adequate funding. If it does not, such mandates are not binding-they are optional. As elected officials representing communities of diverse political perspectives, we are united in our commitment to uphold this statutory protection and exercise it with discretion.

Some recent mandates that are estimated to result in substantial, uncompensated costs include:

- HUTF funding redirected to other priorities not roads - roads are crumbling.
- SB23-166 & SB24-005: Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code
- HB21-1286: Energy Benchmarking & Building Performance Standards
- HB21-1236: Colorado OIT Compliance

Board of County Commissioners

Miles Lucero - District 1

Paula McPheeters - District 2

Zach Swearingen - District 3

- SB 22-30: Collective Bargaining
- HB21-1110: Digital Accessibility
- SB20-217: Bodycams for Law Enforcement

These mandates require counties to dedicate staff time, upgrade systems, or implement new procedures- none of which come with state funding.

We respectfully urge the General Assembly to reconsider the volume and scope of unfunded mandates. Additionally, we urge Governor Polis to exercise his veto power over unfunded mandates. We ask for an open dialogue on solutions, including funding mechanisms or revisions to the statutory frameworks requiring compliance.

We remain committed to collaboration and problem-solving. However, we also recognize that the tension between state directives and local autonomy may, at times, require clarity from the courts. If that clarification becomes necessary, we are prepared to stand behind our interpretation and execution of the law.

Counties continue to be indispensable partners in delivering essential services across Colorado. We invite you to join us in a candid conversation about the true costs of these mandates-and the path forward. Our offices are ready to coordinate a meeting at your convenience.

Respectfully,



Miles Lucero
Commissioner, District 1



Paula McPheeters
Commissioner, District 2



Zach Swearingen
Commissioner District 3



Rio Grande County
Board of County Commissioners
925 6th Street, Room 207,
Del Norte, CO 81132

September 17, 2025

The Honorable Jared Polis, Governor of Colorado
136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable James Coleman, President, Colorado Senate
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Julie McCluskie, Speaker, Colorado House of Representatives
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Local Control and Fiscal Responsibility Related to Unfunded State Mandates

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie,

Similar to the recent letter sent to you by the Teller County Board of County Commissioners, we have great concern over the growing fiscal pressures faced by our County. We know we are not alone in stating that unfunded mandates created by State legislation exacerbate fiscal pressure at the local government level and severely strain local resources. The Teller County Commissioners provided several examples of recent legislation resulting in a growing, unsustainable fiscal picture for low population counties like Rio Grande County with a per-capita income below the state median and a higher percentage of population below the federal poverty line than the State median.

In addition to unfunded mandates already signed into law, we continue to be impacted by increased regulatory revisions. The specter of significantly heightened, State-driven regulatory requirements such as jail standards, air quality standards related to methane emissions at county-operated landfills, municipal wastewater treatment standards, human services requirements, judicial support requirements, and disability/accessibility

standards, to name a few, adds to the strain of an ever-growing list of demands on local governments with little-to-no funding from the State.

Property taxes and local, voter-approved sales tax lead a short list of the few locally-controlled revenue sources for local governments. The property tax assessment rate, however, is controlled by the State, thereby limiting the principal revenue generating tool at the local level.

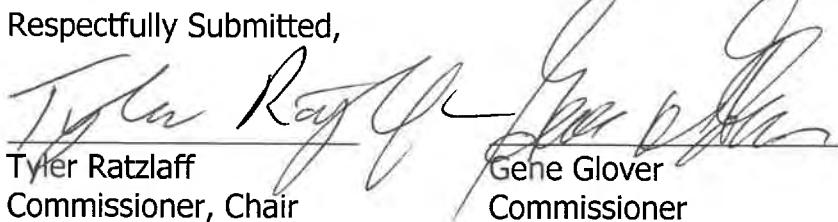
Given these restraints and constraints, we have few options when it comes to responding to increases in required service levels imposed by State law and regulatory bodies at the State level. CRS § 29-1-304.5 provides us with limited statutory discretion when faced with the dilemma of meeting increased State requirements that divert our resources away from the essential functions of government with the most benefit to all or a majority of our constituency.

We are asking you, as the most senior elected representatives of our State government to eliminate future unfunded mandates and work through our branches of state government to reduce or eliminate the adverse impacts of existing unfunded mandates.

Like Teller County, the Rio Grande County Board of County Commissioners has instructed County staff to treat unfunded State mandates as optional under C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5(1). We have and will continue to cooperate with all elements of State government, but we have a duty to protect our taxpayers and judiciously allocate our finite resources.

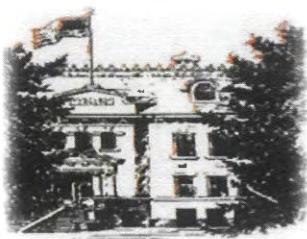
We echo Teller County's invitation to meet with us to better understand the realities of our local challenges, and to work together on practical solutions that respect both local control and statewide priorities.

Respectfully Submitted,


Tyler Ratzlaff
Commissioner, Chair


Gene Glover
Commissioner


Scott Deacon
Commissioner



SAGUACHE COUNTY

505 Third Street • P. O. Box 100
Saguache, Colorado 81149

Phone: (719) 655-2231 • Fax: (719) 655-2635

August 26, 2025

The Honorable Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado
136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable James Coleman
President, Colorado Senate
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Julie McCluskie
Speaker, Colorado House of Representatives
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Bipartisan Action Regarding Unfunded State Mandates

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie:

We, the undersigned Boards of County Commissioners from across Colorado—and from both sides of the political aisle—write with a shared concern: the increasing number of unfunded mandates imposed by the State on Colorado's counties. These **unfunded mandates**, issued without the financial support required to implement them, place an unsustainable burden on local governments and the citizens we serve and undermining both fiscal responsibility and the principle of local control.

Colorado Revised Statutes § 29-1-304.5 plainly states that when the State increases the level of service counties must provide as required by law, it must also provide adequate funding. If it does not, such mandates are not binding, they are optional. As elected officials representing communities of diverse political perspectives, we are united in our commitment to uphold this statutory protection and exercise it with discretion. Examples of recent mandates that have resulted in substantial, uncompensated costs include:

- Colorado Energy Office Benchmarking Requirements
- HB21-1250 Demographic and Contact Reporting
- Cybersecurity Compliance Mandates
- ADA Website compliance
- Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Fraud Prevention Reviews
- WUI (Wildland Urban Interface)

Each of these mandates demands counties to dedicate staff time, upgrade systems, or implement new procedures—none of which come with state funding.

We respectfully urge the General Assembly to reconsider the volume and scope of **unfunded mandates**. Additionally, we urge Governor Polis to exercise his veto power over unfunded mandates. We ask for an open dialogue on solutions, including funding mechanisms or revisions to the statutory frameworks requiring compliance.

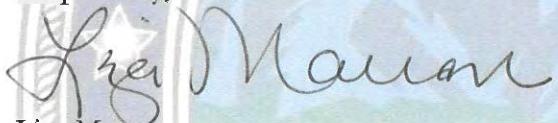
Finally, we are instructing our respective staff to begin treating those unfunded mandates listed above, as optional pursuant to C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5(1). It is our sincere hope that this does not lead to unnecessary litigation, however, our County Attorneys are prepared to defend our exercise of statutory remedies if necessary.

This is not a symbolic gesture. It is a deliberate and lawful step rooted in the statute.

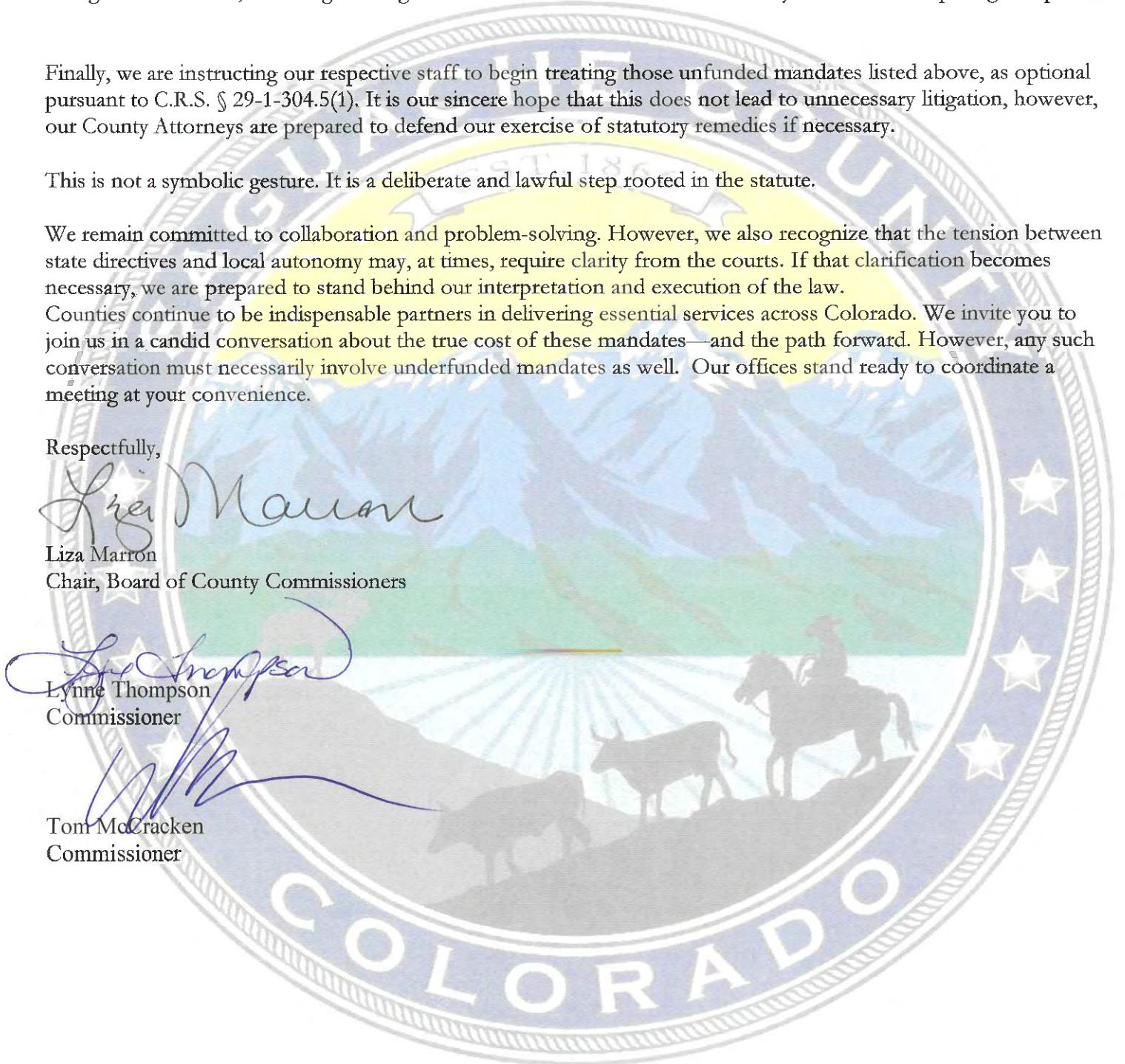
We remain committed to collaboration and problem-solving. However, we also recognize that the tension between state directives and local autonomy may, at times, require clarity from the courts. If that clarification becomes necessary, we are prepared to stand behind our interpretation and execution of the law.

Counties continue to be indispensable partners in delivering essential services across Colorado. We invite you to join us in a candid conversation about the true cost of these mandates—and the path forward. However, any such conversation must necessarily involve underfunded mandates as well. Our offices stand ready to coordinate a meeting at your convenience.

Respectfully,



Liza Marron
Chair, Board of County Commissioners


Lynne Thompson
Commissioner
Tom McCracken
Commissioner

COLORADO



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

970 453 3414 ph | 970 453 3535 f
summitcountyco.gov

208 East Lincoln Ave. | PO Box 68
Breckenridge, Colorado 80424

August 21, 2025

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie:

We, the Summit County Board of County Commissioners, write today to echo and amplify our peer counties concerns with the rise of unfunded mandates imposed by the State on Colorado's counties.

We agree with the positive impacts these policy measures can have and we are grateful for the hard work the legislature and administration have completed for the citizens of Summit County. But as we analyze our own budgets, we have found an increase in legislation that does not include financial or operational support. County staff find themselves even more burdened as they work to meet the demands required by these well-intentioned measures that unfortunately lack the resources necessary to reasonably execute them.

Recent policy initiatives that lack state-funded support include:

- The digital accessibility law
- Climate-focused building code updates
- Massage facilities background check regulations
- Advanced landfill methane capture (Reg 31)

Our staff calculated that the costs for additional labor, services, and materials will run into the millions. One recent example is the CDPHE landfill methane regulations (Regulation 31) alone would cost Summit \$5 million up front plus \$1 million annually.

We empathize with the State's budget challenges but, as you know, counties are severely limited in what taxes and/or fees they can collect to support legislative mandates that aren't accompanied by financial support for implementation.

Collaboration between the State of Colorado and its statutory counties is crucial when it comes to delivering essential services to our communities. We respectfully urge the General Assembly to reconsider the volume and scope of legislated programs imposed on counties and to carefully consider both the compliance impacts and supportive funding mechanisms for enactments so that we are not forced to cut our funding of other important public programs and services.

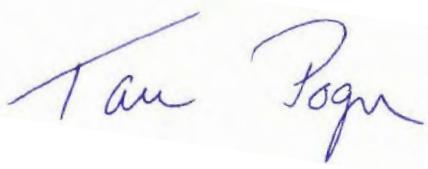
We welcome conversation about the purpose, need, and true costs of these measures to determine how we can move forward with a focus on our community's most pressing challenges.

Sincerely,

The Summit County Board of Commissioners



Eric Mamula
County Commissioner



Tamara Pogue
County Commissioner



Nina Waters
County Commissioner



Board of County Commissioners

Dan Williams - Chairman
Erik Stone - Vice-Chairman
Bob Campbell - Commissioner

August 19, 2025

The Honorable Jared Polis, Governor of Colorado
136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable James Coleman, President, Colorado Senate
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Julie McCluskie, Speaker, Colorado House of Representatives
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

**Re: Protecting Local Control & Fiscal Responsibility
Teller County's Position on Unfunded State Mandates**

Dear Governor Polis, President Coleman, and Speaker McCluskie,

As elected leaders of Teller County, we are entrusted with balancing the needs of our residents with the resources available to us. Over the past several years, the growing number of unfunded mandates from the State has placed an unsustainable strain on counties like ours – minor in population but responsible for delivering a wide range of critical services across a large rural area.

Colorado Revised Statutes § 29-1-304.5 was enacted in 1991 and is unambiguous: when the State increases required service levels, it must provide the necessary funding for those services. Without that funding, such mandates are, by law, optional. Teller County will exercise its statutory discretion when compliance would divert limited local funds from essential community needs.

Recent mandates that present significant unfunded costs for Teller County include, but are not limited to:

- **SB23-166 & SB24-005:** Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code – D Requires significant code adoption and enforcement in a county with vast forested areas, without state support for inspection staff or compliance programs.
- **HB21-1286:** Energy Benchmarking & Building Performance Standards – Demands system upgrades and monitoring capacities that exceed our current staffing and budget.
- **HB21-1250:** Demographic and Contact Reporting – Adds administrative burden without offsetting resources.
- **HB21-1236:** Colorado OIT Compliance – Imposes IT infrastructure standards unfunded by the State.
- **HB21-1110 and SB 23-244:** Digital Accessibility Laws – Imposed digital accessibility laws unfunded by the State.

These directives divert personnel, time, and funding away from public safety, road maintenance, wildfire mitigation, and other essential services that our residents depend on daily.

There is an urgent need to address these recent unfunded State mandates and situations where previously funded programs receive reduced or eliminated funding, but the State mandate continues to exist.

We are calling for a bipartisan, solutions-driven conversation about:

1. Limiting unfunded mandates as we advance,
2. Providing targeted funding when mandates are necessary, and
3. Revisiting statutory frameworks that shift fiscal responsibility to counties without resources to carry it out.

Accordingly, the Teller County Board of County Commissioners has instructed County staff to treat unfunded State mandates as optional under C.R.S. § 29-1-304.5(1). This decision is not taken lightly – it is a lawful, deliberate step to protect our taxpayers and maintain control over how we allocate our finite resources. We remain ready to collaborate, but we will defend our position in court if required.

Teller County's role is to serve our residents first. We invite you to meet with us here in the County – to see firsthand the realities of our geography, budgets, and workforce, and to work together on practical solutions that respect both local control and statewide priorities.

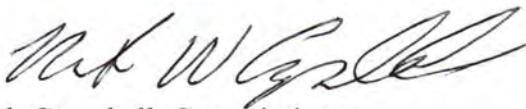
Respectfully,



Dan Williams, Chairman



Erik Stone, Vice-Chairman



Bob Campbell, Commissioner



CCI Colorado
Counties, Inc.

2026

Policy Statement

2026 POLICY STATEMENT

Overview

The 2026 Policy Statement was developed with input from all nine steering committees and provides general direction to CCI, including staff, and external partners. The nine steering committees will convene regularly during the 2026 session of the General Assembly and are charged with the responsibility of advancing CCI's position on specific legislation as it is introduced. This statement serves as a guide to those committees as they debate issues and establish a "CCI position."

Adopted October 3, 2025

Table of Contents

Legislative Principles.....	3
Preamble	4
Agriculture, Wildlife & Rural Affairs.....	7
General Government.....	10
Health & Human Services.....	13
Justice & Public Safety.....	20
Land Use & Natural Resources	23
Public Lands.....	27
Taxation & Finance.....	30
Tourism, Resorts & Economic Development.....	32
Transportation & Telecommunications	37

LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES

The principles outlined below result from ongoing discussions in all five CCI districts and nine Steering Committees. These principles are meant as self-enforcing principles that provide guidance to CCI members to make final determination in each instance. In accordance with the CCI Bylaws, Steering Committees are responsible for reviewing Member-adopted policy (Legislative Priorities), provide direction on legislative issues (adopt bill positions, update Policy Statement), and study and make recommendations on issues related to assigned subject areas [Article XI, Section 3, Part 3].

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

In every case, a CCI initiated bill needs sponsors, an appropriate coalition to support the measure, the support of CCI members, and consistent lobbying and vote counting to be successful. Before initiating a bill or taking a position, CCI should also carefully consider the likelihood of success of a legislative proposal. In this way, we keep the faith with legislators who support us and sponsor our bills. CCI should be conscious of fiscal realities when considering initiating or taking a position on a piece of legislation.

If we are to retain a high level of credibility CCI-initiated legislation should be realistic and closely related to the conduct of our members' responsibilities. CCI's primary focus should be on matters of importance to our members. Local elected officials' groups, county and otherwise, as well as other interest groups, should be encouraged to find sponsors for and initiate their own proposals, allowing our members and CCI to take a supportive role when the bill is introduced.

BILL POSITIONS

Through staff assignment of legislation, those bills which will clearly have an impact on county responsibilities and interests, will be assigned to a Steering Committee for consideration of a bill position. Bills that could influence our members' responsibilities, if modified, should be monitored by CCI staff and brought to the Steering Committee if a change in the bill warrants consideration of a position.

All issues for deliberation by a Steering Committee should be placed on the appropriate committee agenda in a timely manner in accordance with CCI's 5-day advance notice policy to allow adequate consideration. Addendums should be provided in a timely manner.

PREAMBLE

County commissioners, as elected officials representing the interests of their citizens through Colorado Counties, Inc. (CCI), affirm the following principles for effective governance.

UNFUNDDED MANDATES

In order to effectively serve the needs of their communities, county officials must have the resources and authority commensurate with the responsibilities placed on them by state and federal laws, regulations and court decisions.

CCI strongly supports the provision of adequate state funding for any future state or federally imposed mandates upon local government, including the need for technology improvements necessary to fulfill these mandates.

CCI strongly opposes cost shifting from the state and federal government to local governments. In all decision making, state government should refrain from solving state budget shortfalls with county government resources.

State and federal government should base decisions about laws and regulations affecting county governments on comprehensive data and measurable outcomes. Relying on these two standards to scrutinize existing and proposed laws and regulations will help reduce unnecessary, unfunded, or underfunded mandates, streamline government, and utilize limited resources more efficiently.

State and federal officials should consider other programmatic models that might exist and the possible limitations on local control that might result from new legislation, rules or regulations. The most effective governance results from local, state and federal officials working in true partnership toward the development and implementation of programs and services.

LOCAL CONTROL AND FLEXIBILITY

County officials are the elected officials closest and most responsive to the citizens. We strongly support the concept of true home rule power and authority for counties consistent with those given to municipalities.

CCI supports regulatory and legislative efforts enabling volunteer organizations to continue providing services to their communities.

We support efforts to provide counties with the greatest autonomy and flexibility possible.

RULE-MAKING PROCESS

County officials oppose any administrative effort to promulgate rules and regulations that interpret the law in a manner that negatively impacts counties. We believe county commissioners are important and necessary stakeholders in any rule-making process, as such we will continue to support our inclusion in all relevant rulemakings.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS

Counties recognize the important role all levels of government play in our intergovernmental system. We respect the unique and important roles of the federal, state and local government, and believe counties are much more than an administrative arm of state government. Commissioners represent the

interests of their constituents, and counties must be viewed as partners, not as a “special” interest. Counties must be involved in executive department restructuring that directly affects county operations and programs administered by county government.

COUNTY REPRESENTATION

CCI supports realistic and equitable recognition of the role of county government in carrying out coordinated government programs, including commissioner representation on state boards, and commissions and working groups appointed by members of the executive, legislative or judicial branch whose decisions affect county government.

Colorado counties have strong opposition to preemption, rather advocating for local control and decision-making authority to address their unique needs and challenges effectively.



Advance Colorado is a non-profit dedicated to educating Coloradans on the benefit of strong and sustainable state and local governing solutions in the areas of fiscal responsibility and transparency, limited government, free enterprise, lower taxes, strong public safety, and an accountable education system.

info@advancecolorado.org

www.advancecolorado.org

[@advancecolorado](https://twitter.com/advancecolorado)

[in](https://www.linkedin.com/company/advancecolorado/) [X](https://twitter.com/advancecolorado) [f](https://www.facebook.com/advancecolorado) [o](https://www.instagram.com/advancecolorado/)