



ACCOUNTABILITY · INTEGRITY · RESPECT

Board of County Commissioners

1001 East Avenue
Durango, CO 81301

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