



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

