



COLORADO

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

District 1 - John Justman 970-244-1605
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District 3 - Rose Pugliese 970-244-1606

March 5, 2019

The Honorable Faith Winter, Chair
Senate Transportation & Energy Committee
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Letter of Opposition for Senate Bill 19-181

Dear Chairwoman Winter and Committee Members:

The Board of Mesa County Commissioners and the Grand Junction City Council submits this letter in strong opposition to SB19-181, concerning additional protections regarding the conduct of oil and gas operations.

Passage of SB19-181 would effectively create an oil and gas ban which would negatively affect thousands of hard-working families in the energy industry in Colorado counties, especially in Mesa County. Our community is known as a hub of the West Slope energy industry, and many of the industry's workforce and suppliers, and their families, live in Mesa County even though they may work in surrounding counties.

The proponents of SB19-181 promote it as an enhancement for additional local control. However, local jurisdictions already have control through their land use regulatory processes (see attached enclosure, Guide to Natural Gas/Oil Regulations & Development Projects in Mesa County) working in cooperation with the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission ("COGCC"). What the proponents of SB19-181 fail to mention is that SB19-181 is actually over-regulation disguised as local control, and is intended to effectively eliminate oil and gas exploration and production in Colorado.

The energy industry in Colorado has been successful in part because of the COGCC. There is a consistent, statewide set of rules that each producer can rely upon. Having to navigate a myriad of different and potentially conflicting local regulations will certainly reduce investor confidence and the future success of the industry. Currently, the energy industry keeps people employed, puts food on the table and provides good-paying jobs throughout the West Slope, and particularly in Mesa County, with more than 3,000 employees living here. These people are our friends and our families, and their children go to our schools. They support agriculture and the outdoor recreation industry, including projects like the Palisade Plunge, where the energy industry and the outdoor recreation community came together to promote an important economic development project for our community.

The loss of Colorado's energy sector that would result if SB19-181 passes would devastate Colorado's economy, cripple both state and local budgets, and threaten thousands of working families, both in and out of the energy industry.

Please do not allow SB19-181 to take away our future economic stability and long-term jobs. Mesa County strongly urges you to oppose SB19-181 and help counties across Colorado by defeating this overreaching legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RP' or similar initials, written in a cursive style.

Rose Pugliese, Chair
Board of County Commissioners

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Barbara Traylor Smith', written in a cursive style.

Barbara Traylor Smith
Mayor of Grand Junction

Enclosure