

ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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February 10, 2015

Timothy V. Corrigan
District 1

Douglas B. Monger
District 2

Cari Hermacinski
District 3

Thomas A. Sullivan
County Manager

To the Members of the Colorado Legislature:

The Routt County Board of County Commissioners would like to express its unanimous support of Routt County's request to move from Category III to Category II. Research has been compiled looking at numerous points of data from service level surveys to total assessed valuation and cost of living indicators that all lend support and justification for reclassification of the county.

For purposes of establishing the salaries of officers, the counties of the state are divided into six categories (C.R.S. 30-2-102). After review of the applicable numbers and considering county variations that impact the workload and responsibilities of the Routt County Officers, the Routt County Board of County Commissioners find that sufficient data exists to reclassify Routt County from a Category III to Category II County and requests the Colorado legislature to support a bill for such reclassification.

We believe cost of living factors should be a major consideration in a county's classification; Routt was found to be the 5th most expensive county in Colorado under a Cost of Living Index put together by a CSU Demographer- the study is dated (2007 data) but is backed up by a 2013 study from Yampa Valley Data Partners that indicates that Routt has "*become less affordable since 2010.*" Median home prices, as you know, drive much of this data. In addition, the fact that Routt County employees' salary-surveys are compared against Category II counties further supports the justification for a reclassification; this is evident by the fact that at least one and up to several employees within the elected departments earn a higher salary than the elected official. This situation leads to problems with orderly succession plans within departments as well as qualified deputies who are reluctant to step up to the elected position as it often requires a considerable pay cut.

Finally, Article X, Section 15 speaks to fixing the compensation of county officers to "*reflect variations in the workloads and responsibilities of county officers.*" Routt County is quite diverse and complex being home to a top-ranking world class ski resort and the extensive support lodging properties (public and private) that goes with such a ski area. Routt County also boasts a top producing coal mine (with a new one coming online to replace the current), a major power plant, pioneering and complicated rural land-use planning mechanisms, extensive public lands, and emerging oil and gas exploration. All

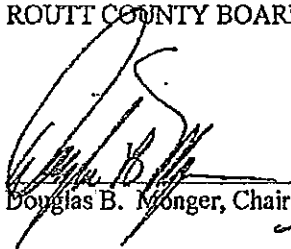
this is topped off by a very strong and robust agricultural and tourism *way of life* that creates strategic challenges in striking the right balance in county management of its affairs. Few, if any, Colorado counties can say they have all these elements within their boundaries.

Routt County wishes to bring the compensation of county officers to a more equitable level to attract and sustain qualified individuals in these extremely important elected positions.

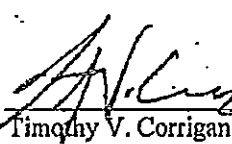
Thank you for your consideration and support in the passage of this reclassification.

Sincerely,


ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Douglas B. Monger, Chair



Timothy V. Corrigan



Cari Hermacinski

Routt County Elected Officials

Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Web: www.co.routt.co.us • Email: office@co.routt.co.us

Garrett Wiggins, Sheriff • Brita Horn, Treasurer • Gary Peterson, Assessor • Kim Bonner, Clerk • Rob Ryg, Coroner

Tuesday, February 03, 2015

To the Members of the Colorado Legislature:

Routt County's elected officials - *in unison with our County Commissioners* - would like to voice our full support of Routt County's request to move from Category III to Category II by way of a 2015 legislative Bill. Research has been compiled looking at numerous points of data from service levels to total assessed valuation and cost of living indicators that all lend credible support and firm justification for a reclassification of Routt to a Category II county.

As elected *professionals* we are very dedicated to the office we hold. The positions we hold, while elected, are not political. They are professions requiring leadership, competency and absolute integrity. Although elected, our positions are our professions, not a secondary source of income. We are department heads, managers, directors, leaders. We work long, hard hours to make sure the job is done with the highest standards. The reclassification request before you is not only about fair and equitable compensation, but also about attracting well-qualified individuals in future years to take over or run for these elected offices so that our county is staffed by competent leaders. With the current situation, our Deputies and even our 3rd & 4th in-command or senior employees are not stepping up to run for office, because it means a substantial pay cut; consequently, a process of orderly succession is broken. A reclassification upward will alleviate this issue and put Routt County in the appropriate category.

Please ensure that effective local government continues to be accomplished through the leadership of dedicated and well-qualified elected county officials and support Routt's request for a category change.

Sincerely,

Garrett Wiggins
Routt County Sheriff (R)

Gary Peterson
Routt County Assessor (R)

Kim Bonner
Routt County Clerk (D)

Brita Horn
Routt County Treasurer (R)

Rob Ryg
Routt County Assessor (R)