

SB 09-180 - Collective Bargaining for Public Safety Employees

- Since SB 09-180 is applicable to home rule municipalities and there is a **serious question as to its constitutionality** on this point. Article XX of the Colorado Constitution specifically reserves to home rule municipalities the creation and terms of employment and the qualification and terms or tenure of employees and "Every charter shall provide that the department of the fire and police...shall be under such civil service regulations as in said charter shall be provided." (Art. XX, Sec. 3.)
- The needs of public safety agencies and their communities depend on **local factors** such as population, demographics, and size. A "one-size fits all" approach is a disservice to the citizens we serve and prevents local jurisdictions from responsibly addressing local, complex labor relationship factors.
- The City of Grand Junction does not believe that collective bargaining rights should be denied. Rather, it is the opinion of this City that decisions regarding collective bargaining relationships **should be decided locally based upon local conditions and circumstances and not mandated by Federal or State legislation.**
- Federal and State Collective Bargaining Legislation prohibits local control and **removes the local organization's flexibility** to promptly and adequately address the changing needs of the employees and the community.
- **A special election was held in Grand Junction on February 1, 2000**, to determine whether the City's Charter should be amended to allow police and fire employees to organize and bargain collectively with the City.
- The question failed by **7245 against to 3233 in favor.**
- The special election process is demonstrative of **the importance of the local citizenry deciding key policies regarding labor relations.** SB 09-180 would take that decision away from them.
- That the question **failed by more than a two-to-one margin** is evidence that collective bargaining for public safety employees is **neither the desired, nor effective mechanism** for all public safety agencies.
- Collective bargaining does not always lead to increased cooperation between employees and employers and **can create friction** and distract from the overall goal of Public Safety.
- Pitting employees and employers against each other at the bargaining table **distracts from the most important mission of Public Safety Agencies:** protecting the public with the best service possible.
- *"Managing by contract usually means winners and losers. Good communication and partnering with our employees usually means win-win."* **Grand Junction Fire Chief Ken Watkins**



CITY COUNCIL

March 31, 2009

The Honorable Laura Bradford
200 E. Colfax
Denver, CO 80203

Subject: Collective Bargaining for Public Safety Employees

Dear Representative Bradford:

Thank you for the opportunity to share our position on the Senate Bill 09-180. Because of the significant impact this piece of legislation would have on the City of Grand Junction, I appreciate this opportunity to express our concerns. Although we do not believe that collective bargaining rights should be denied to our employees, it is a dangerous and detrimental practice to establish contractual employment relationships mandates at the State level without regard to local factors.

The citizens of Grand Junction have elected myself, as well my fellow Council Members, and it is therefore our responsibilities to speak on behalf of the City of Grand Junction in opposition to this legislation for the following reasons:

- Determining labor relationships at the State level severely restricts local governments and the citizenry from creating effective policies that are suitable for their circumstances;
- This legislation will hurt our ability to provide the most competitive compensation and protection to our Public Safety Employees;
- Even more detrimental would be the loss of our public's trust, which is vital to our ability to fight and prevent crime.

Senate Bill 09-180 would not only be a disservice to our organization, public safety employees and the citizens we serve, it is also an unconstitutional invasion of our Home Rule Charter

As Mayor, and on behalf of the entire City Council of Grand Junction, Colorado, I hereby join the Colorado State Fire Chiefs' Association, the Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police, the County Sheriffs of Colorado, the Special District Association and the Colorado Municipal League in opposition to Senate Bill 09-180.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this most important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gregg Palmer".

Gregg Palmer
Mayor
City of Grand Junction



March 31, 2009

The Honorable Steve King
200 E. Colfax
Denver, CO 80203

Subject: Collective Bargaining for Public Safety Employees

Dear Representative King:

Thank you for the opportunity to share our position on the Senate Bill 09-180. Because of the significant impact this piece of legislation would have on the City of Grand Junction, I appreciate this opportunity to express our concerns. Although we do not believe that collective bargaining rights should be denied to our employees, it is a dangerous and detrimental practice to establish contractual employment relationships mandates at the State level without regard to local factors.

The citizens of Grand Junction have elected myself, as well my fellow Council Members, and it is therefore our responsibilities to speak on behalf of the City of Grand Junction in opposition to this legislation for the following reasons:

- Determining labor relationships at the State level severely restricts local governments and the citizenry from creating effective policies that are suitable for their circumstances;
- This legislation will hurt our ability to provide the most competitive compensation and protection to our Public Safety Employees;
- Even more detrimental would be the loss of our public's trust, which is vital to our ability to fight and prevent crime.

Senate Bill 09-180 would not only be a disservice to our organization, public safety employees and the citizens we serve, it is also an unconstitutional invasion of our Home Rule Charter

As Mayor, and on behalf of the entire City Council of Grand Junction, Colorado, I hereby join the Colorado State Fire Chiefs' Association, the Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police, the County Sheriffs of Colorado, the Special District Association and the Colorado Municipal League in opposition to Senate Bill 09-180.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this most important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gregg Palmer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gregg Palmer
Mayor
City of Grand Junction



CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

March 31, 2009

The Honorable Laura Bradford
200 E. Colfax
Denver, CO 80203

Subject: Collective Bargaining for Public Safety Employees

Dear Representative Bradford,

I would like to thank you in advance for reading this letter and for your consideration of the negative impact Senate Bill 09-180, Collective Bargaining for Public Safety Employees, would have on local governments. I have attached a position paper which details the reasons why the City of Grand Junction, our citizens and our employees would be negatively affected by this legislation.

In addition, I would like to offer the following discussion points regarding mandating, at a state level, the employer's requirement to enter into a collective bargaining contract with employees:

- The City of Grand Junction currently compensates our employees more competitively than the State and National Maximum Base Salary;
- This bill is a direct invasion of the State into the employment practices and policies of local governments;
- These decisions should be made at the local level where citizens, employees and employers are most informed;
- Finally, Article XX of the Colorado Constitution specifically reserves to Home Rule Municipalities, such as the City of Grand Junction, the creation and terms of employment and the qualifications and tenure of employees.

Senate Bill 09-180 would not only be a disservice to our organization, public safety employees and the citizens we serve, it is also an unconstitutional invasion of our Home Rule Charter. I am therefore joining the Colorado State Fire Chiefs' Association, the Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police, the County Sheriffs of Colorado, the Special District Association and the Colorado Municipal League in opposition to Senate Bill 09-180.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this most important issue.

Sincerely and with Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Laurie Kadrich".

Laurie Kadrich
City Manager
City of Grand Junction



CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

March 31, 2009

The Honorable Steve King
200 E. Colfax
Denver, CO 80203

Subject: Collective Bargaining for Public Safety Employees

Dear Representative King,

I would like to thank you in advance for reading this letter and for your consideration of the negative impact Senate Bill 09-180, Collective Bargaining for Public Safety Employees, would have on local governments. I have attached a position paper which details the reasons why the City of Grand Junction, our citizens and our employees would be negatively affected by this legislation.

In addition, I would like to offer the following discussion points regarding mandating, at a state level, the employer's requirement to enter into a collective bargaining contract with employees:

- The City of Grand Junction currently compensates our employees more competitively than the State and National Maximum Base Salary;
- This bill is a direct invasion of the State into the employment practices and policies of local governments;
- These decisions should be made at the local level where citizens, employees and employers are most informed;
- Finally, Article XX of the Colorado Constitution specifically reserves to Home Rule Municipalities, such as the City of Grand Junction, the creation and terms of employment and the qualifications and tenure of employees.

Senate Bill 09-180 would not only be a disservice to our organization, public safety employees and the citizens we serve, it is also an unconstitutional invasion of our Home Rule Charter. I am therefore joining the Colorado State Fire Chiefs' Association, the Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police, the County Sheriffs of Colorado, the Special District Association and the Colorado Municipal League in opposition to Senate Bill 09-180.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this most important issue.

Sincerely and with Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurie Kadrich".

Laurie Kadrich
City Manager
City of Grand Junction