



April 22, 2009

Members of the Colorado House State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee
Representative Todd Representative Massey
Representative Labuda Representative McCann
Representative Casso Representative Miklosi
Representative Court Representative Murray
Representative Hullinghorst Representative Nikkel
Representative Lambert

Re: Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce request to vote NO on **SB09-180**

Dear Representatives:

The House State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee is in the process of considering **SB09-180** concerning state-mandated collective bargaining on local governments. I am writing this letter on behalf of the Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce to indicate our strong *opposition* to **SB09-180** and to request that you make every effort to ensure that the bill does not become Colorado law.

Our Chamber represents over 1200 businesses in Grand Junction and surrounding areas, most of which are small businesses. Let it be understood that our Chamber recognizes the importance of and supports our local firefighters and law enforcement officers. We showed this support recently by supporting our City's efforts to pass a public safety initiative that sought to enhance the facilities, equipment and services of our local police and fire departments. That being said, the Chamber also supports the right of local governments to local control and opposes any legislation or mandate that would seek to erode such local control and authority of local governments.

It is our position that SB09-180 does just that in seeking to override the local will of voters and impose collective bargaining on local firefighters. To us, local control means that local governments should determine whether or not to engage in collective bargaining with any class of their employees. In the mid 1990's, our Chamber joined local citizens and businesses in rejecting collective bargaining for our community at the ballot box. SB09-180 would repeal that right for citizens, businesses and organizations such as ours to give local approval to collective bargaining.

From the standpoint of a Chamber of Commerce, the implications of SB09-180 also raise significant concerns about the additional tax burdens on businesses at a time when businesses are already struggling to pay increasing taxes and deal with the current economic conditions of the state. SB09-180 will lead to increased government budgets which will end up hitting taxpayers.

We remain committed to supporting our local governments and to representing the interests and concerns of taxpaying business owners who have a viable interest in municipal spending. We respectfully ask that you consider the following points of concern we have expressed in this letter when voting on SB09-180:

- The GJCC recognizes the importance of and supports our local firefighters and law enforcement officers
- The GJCC opposes legislation and/or mandates that would erode local control and the authority of local governments
- SB-180 is an unfunded mandate forced on local governments
- Collective bargaining will lead to increased government budgets, which will lead to increased taxation on the business owners of our community

For these reasons and those expressed by our local governments we respectfully request your NO vote on **SB09-180** and, as always, appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Dean Massey

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CC: Senator Josh Penry
Representative Steve King
Representative Laura Bradford