



Legislative Report 2021 Session | February 22, 2021

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Agriculture, Wildlife & Rural Affairs

Chair: Commissioner Tony Hass, Las Animas County
Vice Chair: Commissioner Terry Hofmeister, Phillips County
CCI Staff: Daphne Gervais

HB21-1045, Invasive Pest Control Administration

HB21-1045 is a bill from the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) that seeks to update the Pest Control Act to better align with model legislation by the National Plant Board. The bill establishes a new emergency invasive pest response cash fund for emergency pest control measures, funded by a portion of the unused funds from CDA's Plant Industry Division. The bill also allows the Department to recover costs from local governments, citizens, and businesses for services provided under the Act, contingent upon a local government voluntarily signing into agreement with CDA.

The bill also allows CDA to implement a federally recognized state-managed pest control program, which would justify federal inspectors at ports of entry to support the state's efforts in excluding pests under the federally recognized state program designation.

HB21-1045 is assigned to the House Agriculture, Livestock & Water Committee, and is scheduled for a hearing today, February 22nd, at 1:30PM.

Position: Pending

Sponsor: Reps. Young & A. Valdez. and Sen. Fields



General Government

Chair: Commissioner Hilary Cooper, San Miguel County

Vice Chair: Commissioner Scott James, Weld County

CCI Staff: Eric Bergman

HB21-1011, Multilingual Ballot Access for Voters

HB 1011 would require the Secretary of State (SOS) and certain counties to provide multilingual ballot access. The SOS would be required to set-up a multilingual ballot hotline to help electors translate ballot language and to translate all state races and state ballot questions for the county clerks. Counties that have at least 2,000 citizens (or 2.5 percent of the total population) who speak a minority language would be required to prepare an in-person minority language ballot that would be available upon request at voting service centers without any state financial assistance.

According to the County Clerks Association, the bill would place this unfunded mandate on approximately 20 counties. The affected counties include Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Douglas, El Paso, Jefferson, Larimer, Pueblo, Weld, Alamosa, Bent, Crowley, Eagle, Fremont, Garfield, Lincoln, Montrose, Morgan, Phillips, and Rio Grande. The fiscal note on the bill estimates that annual compliance with the mandates in the bill will cost \$46,000 for a small sized county, \$61,000 for a medium sized county and \$360,000 for a large county.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Rep. Caravao and Sens. Gonzales & Moreno

HB21-1047, County Commissioner District Gerrymandering

HB 1047 would take the political gerrymandering protections established in the state constitution by Amendments Y and Z and attempt to apply them to county commissioner districts in those counties where at least one commissioner is not elected by the voters of the whole county. The bill would only be applicable to counties with populations greater than 70,000 that elect to move to a five-member commission or ones that have a home rule charter. Currently, there are three counties that would be subject to this legislation: Arapahoe, El Paso, and Weld.

The bill requires multiple hearings around the county during the development of the commissioner districts, the creation and maintenance of a website where citizens can electronically submit alternative district maps and comments and participate remotely on hearings. Once drawn, the commissioner districts must also face review by a judicial panel. The fiscal note on the bill estimates it would cost counties up to \$135,000 each to comply. The affected counties are working with the bill sponsor on possible amendments to the bill.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Rep. Kennedy



HB21-1100, Electronic Filing of Documents with Governmental Entities

HB 1100 would require all governmental entities (including counties) to establish by 2022 an electronic filing option for each document capable of electronic delivery. The bill hopes to build on social distancing policies already enacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This filing option can include the scanning and transmitting of a document by e-mail. The governmental entity must also protect personal identifying information in any submitted electronic filing.

CCI is in the process of determining how much of this local filing option has already been accomplished at the county level and how much is left to be done. The bill has been assigned to the House Finance Committee but has not been calendared yet.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Rep. Soper and Sen. Bridges

SB21-070, County Authority to Register Businesses

SB 70 would authorize counties to institute a registration program for all businesses in the unincorporated area of the county. The bill was heard in the Senate Local Government Committee last week and passed on a 5-0 vote. The bill was amended on second reading to address concerns from the Farm Bureau on the use of any data collected on businesses and to clarify that there is no penalty or fine for failure to register with the county. The bill is expected to pass the Senate this week and move on to the House.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Sen. Moreno and Rep. Bird



Health & Human Services

Chair: Commissioner Wendy Buxton-Andrade, Prowers County

Vice Chair: Commissioner Sue Hansen, Montrose County

CCI Staff: Gini Pingenot / Kyley Burress

SB 21-071 Limit the Detention of Juveniles

This bill's main objective is to cap the number of juvenile detention beds being used in the State from 327 to 188. Division of Youth Services (DYS) will be tasked with capping beds by January 2022. The bill prohibits the use of money and property on a bond for charged juveniles.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Sen. Buckner

Lobbyist: Kyley Burress

HB21-1107 Protections for Public Health Department Workers

This bill is a continuum of pieces of legislation that passed the last two years to increase protections for human service workers and law enforcement officials, HB19-1197 and HB20-1052. Under current law it is unlawful for personal information of human service workers, caseworkers, and law enforcement personnel to be made available on the internet. HB21-1107 extends these protections to public health workers. Examples of personal information include phone number, home address, name of children and/ or spouse etc.

This legislation is necessary because with COVID-19 putting public health directors in the spotlight, employees are concerned about their personal information being available on the internet and clients using that information for malicious purpose.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Rep Caraveo and Carver, Sen. Bridges and Lundeen

Lobbyist: Kyley Burress



HB21-1084 Drivers' License for Foster Children

HB 1084 will assist individuals in the foster care system acquire a driver's license. This bill also creates a grant program in the Department of Human Services to reimburse counties for the costs paid to a public or private driving school for foster children between the ages of 15-20.

This bill may sound familiar because it was around last session, HB20-1071, but because of COVID-19 it did not make it across the finish line.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Reps. Exum & Van Winkle and Sen. Hisey

Lobbyist: Kyley Burress

HB21-1018 Adoptive Parents Payments to Outside Providers

HB 1018 allows foster parents to pay for services from providers that do not accept Medicaid. There are instances when a foster parent can financially pay out of pocket for services that a foster child/youth might need. An example might be sexual abuse treatment and/or a super specialized service that is not covered by Medicaid.

In preliminary conversations with the bill's sponsor, both the Colorado Department of Human Services and counties asked for clarification that if adoptive parents did pay for these sorts of services out-of-pocket, that they could not later be presented as a reason for increasing payments through an adoption agreement negotiation. Without this clarification, human service experts are concerned that adoptive parents will basically be allowed to 'shop out of Medicaid'.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Rep. Bernett & Van Beber, Sen. Jaquez Lewis

Staff: Gini Pingenot

HB21-1030 Expanding Peace Officers Mental Health Grant Program

With the support of 22 representatives and 11 senators, HB 1030 builds upon an existing \$2.0 million grant program administered by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs. The Peace Officers Mental Health Support and Community Partnerships Grant program was first formed in 2017 to provide direct services to peace officers (i.e. mental health counseling, training to prevent and treat mental trauma, etc.) and support what is commonly referred to as 'co-responder' programs.

HB 1030 continues the original purpose of the grant program while also 1.) expanding the type of law enforcement agencies that can apply for the grant dollars; 2.) modifying the grant program's name; and 3.) removing the repeal date. In addition – but separately from this bill, CCI also



understands that legislators will attempt to secure additional state general funds for this grant program through the budget process.

Counties are strong supporters of the co-responder model. These programs typically, but not always, pair peace officers with a behavioral health provider to respond to calls for services. Roughly 30 communities around the state have these programs and have found them to be successful at de-escalating calls that come in through the 911 system and keeping those with behavioral health and/or substance use issues out of the criminal justice system. A recent study by the Colorado Health Institute provides a nice overview of these programs, their effectiveness and areas for continual growth and improvement – [view here](#).

Working in close partnership with the Fraternal Order of Police, HB 1030 is one of CCI's eight legislative priorities. The bill will be heard on Monday, March 2 in the House Public & Behavioral Health and Human Services Committee.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Reps. McCluskie & McKean and Sens. Buckner & Cooke

Staff: Gini Pingnot

HB21-1072 Equal Access Service for Out of Home Placements

HB 1072 aims to ensure that all children and youth in out of home placements (think foster homes, congregate care settings, etc.) are accommodated for their identity and that providers do not discriminate.

While the overarching goal and intent will be echoed by counties, the specifics need some fine tuning. Specifically, the bill states that counties cannot delay or deny placement of a child or youth for adoption. County human service experts have flagged that there could be instances when a placement with an eligible family is not in the best interest of the child. As written, the language suggests that if there is an open placement, counties must place the child, regardless of whether or not it is a good fit for the child.

Additionally, the bill states that people who wish to be adoptive or foster parents cannot be denied the opportunity to do so. Again, there are instances – such as an individual with a disability that makes them incapable of safely parenting a specific child and/or individuals who may follow a religion that includes practices that are considered to be abusive in mainstream culture that would need to be handled on a case-by-case basis.

County Human Service experts have met with One Colorado, the bill proponent, and have shared these concerns with them. Additionally, CCI staff has visited with Rep. Froelich who is open to fine tuning the language so that it achieves the intent of protecting children and youth from discrimination while ensuring the child's safety.



Position: Pending
Sponsors: Rep. Froelich and Sens. Fields & Jaquez Lewis
Staff: Gini Pingnot

HB21-1085 Secure Transportation Behavioral Health Crisis

HB 1085 creates a new type of secure transportation option, different than traditional ambulance services, for individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis. This is an optional, new business opportunity for ambulance agencies, law enforcement and emergency service providers. The licensing and permitting authority for this new service will reside with the board of county commissioners. Commissioners can establish a fee to reflect the direct and indirect costs incurred by the county in licensing such service. Entities that wish to provide this service must meet – or exceed – the equipment and training and operating procedures established by the State Board of Health.

CCI proudly supported last year’s bill (HB201-284) that would have accomplished the same thing. Last year’s bill was postponed indefinitely due to COVID-19.

Position: CCI Initiated Bill - Support
Sponsors: Reps. Larson & McCluskie and Sens. Bridges & Smallwood
Lobbyist: Gini Pingnot

HB21-1099 Policies and Procedures to Identify Domestic Abuse

HB 1099, a CCI initiated bill, adds the exposure to ‘domestic abuse’ to the definition of child abuse and neglect.

‘Domestic abuse’ is defined in the civil code (CRS 13-14-101) and speaks to the violence, stalking, harassment or coercion that may exist between adults. Over the years, the child welfare fatality review team (CFRT) have observed an increasing number of egregious, near fatal and fatal cases in which domestic abuse is present and the corresponding emotional and psychological impact this adult behavior has on children. Out of the 232 Incidents reviewed by CFRT in CYs 2014-2019, domestic abuse was a stressor identified 94 times (232/94: 40.5%).

Currently, child welfare caseworkers classify these situations under the catchall of ‘injurious environment’. In the absence of a specific definition for domestic abuse in the children’s code, mandatory reporters and case workers lack clear and intentional direction to watch for the effects of this adult behavior on a child’s wellbeing.

Defining this term in the children’s code establishes clarity for child welfare practice, training, and assessment protocol.



HB21-1099 will be heard on Tuesday, February 23rd in the House Public & Behavioral Health and Human Services Committee. You can view the latest coverage of the bill [here](#).

Position: CCI Initiated Bill - Support

Sponsors: Reps. Michaelson Jenet & Ransom and Sens. Zenzinger & Smallwood

Staff: Gini Pingnot

HB21-1115 Board of Health Member Requirements

HB 1115 prohibits county commissioners from serving on a county/district board of health (BOH). The bill also specifies that board of health members may only be removed for malfeasance, willful neglect of duty or for any cause that renders a member incapable of serving.

Commissioners have expressed the following concerns with HB 1115:

- Public Health Touches on All Aspects of the County. From land use planning to operating jails and providing public benefits, public health considerations is THE common thread that runs throughout county services. Disconnecting county commissioners from the public health considerations they must bring to every aspect of their job will create a silo effect that works against critical public health outcomes for communities.
- Balancing a broad spectrum of community impacts. Commissioners are well-suited for the challenge of listening to and balancing disparate viewpoints in their communities. The pandemic obviously has public health impacts but is also taking a toll on the economic livelihood of Coloradoans in disproportionate ways. Commissioners – through their positions – have been able to convene the community to help identify solutions & innovative approaches.
- Direct connection to supports. Having commissioners serve as the BOH creates a direct feedback loop between public health and county leaders. This creates efficiency and elevates the financial and workforce needs of public health.
- Local flexibility. Current statute already allows counties – of all sizes - to appoint a BOH consisting of community members, a BOH consisting of community members & commissioners, etc.
- Accountability. Commissioners are elected officials working for their communities. Having the BOH consist of elected county commissioners gives the public a vehicle to express (and act on) their discontent with decisions that are made.
- Lack of Volunteers. Small/Medium sized counties struggle to find willing volunteers. Navigating the complexities of the pandemic and the ‘big picture’ understanding and strategy that is required when it comes to the county’s budget, public interaction, direction to departments and the economy is a task few volunteers are willing to assume.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Reps. Kipp & Mullica and Sens. Ginal & Priola

Staff: Gini Pingnot



HB21-1097 Establish Behavioral Health Administration

HB 1097 addresses multiple recommendations from the Colorado Behavioral Health Task Force. Specifically, the bill requires the Colorado Department of Human Services to develop a plan for the creation of the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) and to establish the BHA with specified duties by July 1, 2022.

CDHS is already working closely with Health Management Associates (HMA) to develop the plan that is called for in HB21-1097. HMA will be visiting with counties directly – and through CCI – to hear concerns or unintended consequences that should be considered as the state develops the BHA.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Reps. Young & Pelton and Sen. Fields

Staff: Gini Pingnot



Land Use & Natural Resources

Chair: Commissioner Ben Tisdell, Ouray County
Vice Chair: Commissioner Matt Scherr, Eagle County
CCI Staff: Daphne Gervais

HB21-1008, Forest Health Project Financing

HB21-1008 adds an additional option for financing forest health projects and wildfire mitigation treatments. The bill enables any combination of local governments to, contingent upon voter approval, establish a special improvement district with the power to assess property taxes to conduct forest health projects. Forest health projects include those to replant trees in deforested areas, harvest vegetation for products or fuel, or reduce the impact or threat of high-intensity wildfires, insect diseases, and/or non-native pests.

The bill also extends the Colorado water resources power and development authority's power to issue bonds to fund watershed protection and forest health projects through July 2033.

HB21-1008 is assigned to the House Agriculture, Livestock & Water Committee, and is scheduled for a hearing today, February 22nd, at 1:30PM.

Position: Pending

Sponsor: Rep. Arndt & Catlin, Sen. Cooke & Hansen

HB21-1019, Modification to Regulations of Factory-built Structures

HB21-1019 is a Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) bill that seeks to make it easier and more affordable to deploy modular homes, a type of affordable housing, in our state. The bill makes several clarifications in statute. First, it clarifies that a local government can govern the installation of factory-built housing, and has authority over work completed onsite, whereas work performed offsite on factory-built structures is the state's responsibility. With that, the bill allows the state to authorize a local government to inspect and charge fees related to work that is the state's responsibility. Second, the bill also clarifies that a factory-built structure with an insignia of approval issued by the state complies with applicable state codes and local government installation requirements approved by the state. Third, it clarifies that a local government's rules related to the installations of manufactured homes (weight restrictions for snow roof loads or windshear factors) cannot conflict with federal standards. Finally, the bill clarifies that a county must comply with the state requirements for local installation standards when enacting building code provisions for a manufactured home.



The bill also allows a local government to require onsite mitigation addressing public safety requirements that comply with the federal manufactured home construction and safety standard.

HB21-1019 is assigned to the House Transportation & Local Government Committee but has not yet been scheduled for a hearing.

Position: Pending
Sponsor: Rep. Hooton

HB21-1042, Water Storage Tanks Grant Program

HB21-1042 creates the Water Storage Tank Wildfire Mitigation Grant Program. The bill establishes the grant program within the Colorado State Forest Service, and makes grants available to local governments, tribal agencies, and non-profits for the purchase of water storage tanks for wildfire firefighting efforts. The grant program is funded by the water storage tank wildfire mitigation cash fund created in the bill, to which the General Assembly is required to annually transfer \$5 million general fund through fiscal year 2024-25.

HB21-1042 is assigned to the House Agriculture, Livestock & Water Committee, but has not yet been scheduled for a hearing.

Position: Pending
Sponsor: Rep. Hanks

HB21-1117, Local Government Authority Promote Affordable Housing Units

HB21-1117 is a bill from the Colorado Municipal League that seeks to clarify local governments' ability to enact land use regulations that promote the development of new affordable housing units. In other words, HB 1117 clarifies that local governments have the authority to enact inclusionary zoning. In doing so, the bill specifies that the provisions of the state's rent control statute do not apply to any land use regulation that restricts rent on newly constructed or redeveloped housing units as long as the regulation provides options or alternatives to the property owner or land developer.

This is the return of HB20-1351 that CCI voted to support and that was postponed indefinitely due to COVID-19 last session.

HB 1117 is assigned to the House Transportation & Local Government Committee but has not yet been scheduled for a hearing.

Position: Pending
Sponsor: Rep. Lontine & Gonzales-Gutierrez, Sen. Gonzales & Rodriguez



SB21-054, Transfers for Wildfire Mitigation and Response

SB21-054 is a Joint Budget Committee (JBC) bill that transfers funds to be used to address wildland fires. The bill transfers \$6 million general fund to the Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation Grant Program, which is available to local governments. It transfers \$3 million general fund to the Wildfire Preparedness Fund for the Department of Public Safety to (1) use as the state match for federal hazard mitigation assistance grants to local governments used to mitigate fire hazards, and (2) to provide local governments eligible to receive a federal grant with strategic planning assistance for wildland fire hazard mitigation. Finally, the bill transfers \$4 million general fund to the Colorado Water Conservation Board Construction Fund for the Watershed Restoration Program to support post-fire recovery and mitigation efforts.

SB 054 will be considered by the Senate Appropriations Committee on Tuesday, February 23rd.

Position: Pending

Sponsor: Sen. Hansen & Rankin and Rep. McCluskie

SB21-072, Public Utilities Commission Modernize Electric Transmission Infrastructure

SB21-072 seeks to expand electric transmission facilities in the state by creating the Colorado Electric Transmission Authority (CETA). CETA is granted various powers in the bill, including the power to exercise eminent domain, and to establish intra- and interstate electric transmission corridors. CETA is governed by a board of directors and is authorized to select a transmission operator that finances, operates, and maintains transmission and related facilities. The bill requires transmission utilities to join a regional transmission organization by 2030 and streamlines the Public Utilities Commission's (PUC) approval process for new transmission facilities.

CCI is working with the bill sponsors to clarify that CETA and energy assets would not be property-tax exempt, would not have permitting or siting authority, and would need to coordinate with local planning efforts in the establishment of regional corridors.

SB 72 is assigned to the Senate Transportation & Energy Committee but has not yet been scheduled for a hearing.

Position: Pending

Sponsor: Sen. Hansen and Rep. A. Valdez



Taxation & Finance

Chair: Commissioner Richard Elsner, Park County
Vice Chair: Commissioner Bob Campbell, Teller County
CCI Staff: Gini Pingenot

HB21-1023 Energy Facility Real Property Classification

HB 1023 allows the county assessor to change the classification of real property where a solar garden (over 2 MWs) or wind farm exists. For the most part, these renewable energy installations operate on land that is classified as ‘agricultural’. As such, it is valued using a ‘productive capacity’ consideration which usually results in a low valuation. The 29% assessment rate is then applied.

Under HB 1023, a county assessor can classify the real property as something other than ‘agricultural’. It could be classified as ‘industrial’ or ‘vacant’ land. In both cases, the 29% assessment rate would still be applied but the starting value would be a market value which is generally higher resulting in increased property taxes.

Position: Pending
Sponsors: Rep. Will and Sen. Coram

HB21-1061 Residential Land Property Tax Classification

HB 1061 is the culmination of a long-standing legal debate around the application of the term ‘residential land’. For many years, hundreds of land owners have argued that their vacant parcels that might be near – or touching – the parcel with their home on it should receive the 7.15% residential assessment rate rather than the 29% assessment rate. The debate has centered around these currently undefined terms in state statute: 1.) contiguous and 2.) residential improvement.

HB 1061 defines these terms and clarifies that only parcels that meet all three of the following criteria can be considered residential and assessed at the 7.15%: 1.) identical ownership based on the record title; 2.) physically touching except that contiguity is not interrupted by an intervening local street, alley, or common element in a common-interest community and 3.) consists of a related improvement like a driveway or a parking space.

Position: Pending
Sponsors: Rep. Gray and Sen. Hansen



SB21-020 Energy Equipment and Facility Property Tax Valuations

SB 20 does primarily two things: 1.) values battery storage using a ‘cost approach’ and 2.) extends the existing 20-year valuation tax factor for solar gardens of 2 MW or less to 30-years and applies the income approach to valuing these renewable energy installations.

According to the fiscal note, changing the valuation methodology for community solar gardens to the income approach will result in reduced local property tax revenue of \$3.1million in tax year 2022 and \$3.5 million in tax year 2023. As it relates to battery storage and the reduced rate at which it is assessed, the fiscal note reads: “the bill will reduce the amount of property taxes collected by local government by an indeterminate amount”.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Sen. Hansen & Hisey, Rep. A. Valdez & Soper



Tourism, Resorts & Economic Development

Chair: Commissioner Richard Cimino, Grand County
Vice Chair: Commissioner Elisabeth Lawrence, Summit County
CCI Staff: Daphne Gervais

HB21-1009, Update Division of Housing Function & Local Development

HB21-1009 is a bill from the Department of Local Affairs that seeks to update the statutory functions of the Division of Housing to promote the state's goals related to local development, affordable housing, and energy performance. Currently, the statutory functions of the Division include conducting research on new approaches to housing; the bill expands the Division's functions to include both researching and incentivizing (1) transit-oriented development, (2) increased housing density near employment, education, and town centers, and (3) advanced energy performance standards that minimize total building operational costs. The bill also expands the Division's functions to include collaboration with other state agencies to develop these incentives and to dispose of state-owned assets to be used for low- and moderate-income housing.

HB21-1009 is assigned to the House Transportation & Local Government Committee but has not yet been scheduled for a hearing.

Position: Pending

Sponsor: Rep. Bernett, Sen. Bridges & Coram

HB21-1028, Annual Public Report Affordable Housing

HB21-1028 would create an annual public reporting requirement for the State Division of Housing within the Department of Local Affairs. The report would look at how state and federal housing funds are distributed across the state, by including information on the types of projects being funded (home ownership, permanent supportive housing, homelessness assistance, rental housing assistance, housing rehabilitation, preservation, etc.), the purpose of awards (constructing new housing stock, rehabilitating existing stock, down payment assistance, etc.), the number of housing units built, preserved, or rehabilitated, the location of projects, and the source of funding.

The bill is being brought forward by Habitat for Humanity Colorado; a non-profit organization focused on affordable housing. It is assigned to the House Transportation & Local Government Committee but has not yet been scheduled for a hearing.

Position: Pending

Sponsor: Reps. Bird & Rich and Sens. Story & Woodward



Transportation & Telecommunications

Chair: Commissioner Holly Williams, El Paso County
Vice Chair: Commissioner Jim Candelaria, Montezuma County
CCI Staff: Eric Bergman

HB21-1095, Exempt County Road Maintenance from 811 Locate Requirement

HB 1095 would allow county road and bridge departments to conduct basic maintenance on unpaved county roads without having to call Colorado 811 for utility locates, provided that the maintenance does not lower the grade of the road or disturb more than six inches of soil. The bill is a CCI legislative priority and reflects a compromise that was reached between CCI, Colorado 811, the Colorado Contractors Association, Xcel Energy and the Colorado Association of Road Supervisors and Engineers (CARSE). Twenty-nine other states have a similar exemption for road maintenance. The bill is awaiting a hearing in the House Transportation and Local Government Committee. CCI has prepared a fact sheet on HB 1095 and it can be found by clicking [here](#).

Position: Position: CCI Initiated Bill - Support
Sponsors: Reps. Baisley & Kipp and Sens. Ginal & Woodward

HB21-1109, Broadband Board Changes to Expand Broadband Service

HB 1109 makes a number of changes to the Broadband Deployment Board and to the processes for granting funds to improve broadband service around the state. The bill reduces the number of members on the board from 16 down to 11 - but mandates that two of the members must be county commissioners (one from the Eastern Plains and one from the West Slope). Up to 75% of the program funds are to be prioritized to the most critically underserved areas of the state, which are defined as areas not currently receiving service at speeds of 10 megabits down and 1 megabit up. The bill also provides for better mapping and speed testing in order to determine where these critically underserved areas are. The bill will be heard in the House Transportation and Local Government Committee on Wednesday, Feb. 24.

Position: Pending
Sponsors: Reps. Titone and Soper



SB21-060, Expand Broadband Service

SB 60 is another piece of legislation that makes changes to the Broadband Deployment Board and some of the grant program processes. Like HB 1109, it reduces the number of members on the Board – in this case from 16 members down to nine. Three of the nine members must be representatives of local government. The bill would direct 50% of the program funding to areas that are critically underserved and also directs a portion of the program funding to households that qualify for free school lunches to aid in providing Internet service to school-aged children. Finally, the bill requires better coordination between the Middle-Mile Grant Program in the Department of Local Affairs and the Broadband Deployment Program. The bill is awaiting a hearing date in the Senate Business, Labor and Technology Committee.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Sen. Donovan and Rep. Roberts

SB21-084, County Authority on Roughed-In Roads

SB 84 clarifies that counties have the authority to prohibit motor vehicles from travelling on roughed-in roads. The bill defines “roughed-in roads” as areas of ground that have been cut with the intention of making a roadway but have not been improved enough to qualify as a roadway. The bill is awaiting a hearing in the Senate Local Government Committee.

Position: Pending

Sponsors: Sen. Smallwood and Rep. Gray