



Michael Johnston
Denver Mayor
1437 Bannock St # 350
Denver, CO 80202

March 21, 2024

Re: Clarification or Repeal of Denver Executive Order 142 and Council Bill 17-0940

Mayor Johnston,

Douglas County appreciates your bipartisan efforts to work with us and your regional elected colleagues to make Denver a safer city. You have publicly stated Denver is not a sanctuary city and acknowledged the nation is in an immigration crisis. We respectfully ask you to continue to progress this issue by repealing Denver Executive Order 142 and Council Bill 17-0940 or otherwise publicly clarifying their current application.

During his administration, President Trump zealously enforced federal immigration law. In response, in 2017, Denver enacted Executive Order 142 and Council Bill 17-0940.

Executive Order 142 calls Denver “A Safe and Welcoming City for All” and identifies Denver as “Standing with Immigrants and Refugees”. Substantively, the Order established a legal fund to combat federal immigration enforcement, instructed city agencies, including the police and sheriff’s departments to not cooperate with federal immigration enforcement programs, provided immigrants unlimited access to city services, and threatened discipline, up to termination to any employee that cooperated with federal immigration enforcement.

Council Bill 17-0940 prohibited the use of city resources for immigration enforcement and prohibited city employees from cooperating with the federal government in immigration enforcement.

Conditions have changed, any need for these historic doctrines no longer persists.

Today, there is a new federal administration employing different immigration policies, multiple Colorado laws related to federal immigration enforcement in the state, and Denver is no longer attempting to protect DACA and DREAM immigrants, instead the metro region is bearing the weight of an unrelated national immigration crisis.

Executive Order 142 and Council Bill 17-0940 no longer serve their intended purpose. Instead, these documents serve as attractive lures shared across social media and the border drawing uninformed and desperate families into dangerous conditions. Or, they provide an excuse for overwhelmed communities to enact inhumane policies.



Your neighboring counties and municipalities are taking steps to provide for the safety of our residents and ensure immigrants coming to our country can join our communities safely and legally.

Douglas County has already declared the County is not a sanctuary county. Douglas County and the Metro Area County Commissioners have joined Denver in requesting the federal government provide legal immigrants an expedited right to work. The County has enacted and renewed a public safety order related to the transportation of migrants to preserve public health. The County is enacting bus regulations. The Board of County Commissioners has also instructed the county attorney to pursue legal action challenging state law that limits local governments' response during this crisis.

XO-142 and C.B. 17-0940 endanger countless lives, create division during a crisis that can only be solved through cooperation, and burden the region's institutions, including hospitals, schools, law enforcement, and non-profits.

You have the independent authority to immediately repeal Executive Order 142 and the authority to enact your own executive order clarifying implementation of Denver law or otherwise work with your Council to remediate these outdated policies, as you are no doubt aware there is overwhelming support from citizens in the metro area to do so.

Douglas County stands ready to support you in making the Denver-Metro Region a safer community.

Respectfully,
Douglas County Board of County Commissioners

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George Teal, Chair

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