

February 3, 2025

The Honorable Michael Bennet
U.S. Senator
Colorado
261 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Bennet,

On behalf of the Douglas County Board of Commissioners, Sheriff Darren Weekly, and 23rd Judicial District Attorney George Brauchler, we want to express our sincere thanks to you and your staff for meeting with us to discuss important issues facing Douglas, Elbert, and Lincoln Counties, and the state of Colorado.

We greatly appreciated the opportunity to share information about our Helitack team and the crucial role our helicopter operations have played in combating the 33 wildfires we faced last year. Your interest in a potential regional facility for first responders to provide local law enforcement training and enhance wildfire response was particularly encouraging. We believe that such a project would significantly strengthen our public safety infrastructure and wildfire suppression efforts, and we look forward to potential future collaboration on this initiative.

Additionally, we were pleased to find common ground with you on the critical issue of keeping U.S. Space Command in Colorado. As we discussed, this is an important matter for both national security and Colorado's economy, and we are unified in our support for its continued presence in our state.

The progress on the new wildlife overpass is also an exciting development, and we look forward to seeing how this initiative will help improve public safety and wildlife mobility. The conversation around active forest management and efforts to combat wildfires was also particularly valuable. We appreciate your ongoing leadership in these areas, which are key to ensuring the safety and health of our communities and forests.

We were also grateful to share more information about Congresswoman Lauren Boebert's *Human Trafficking Fingerprint Background Check Protection Act*. This legislation requires owners and employees of massage wellness spas to undergo fingerprint-based background checks to prevent human trafficking and enhance public safety. We support this bill and urge you to work with Congresswoman Boebert on this legislation.

Lastly, we were pleased to discuss opportunities for Douglas County to secure federal resources through Congressional Directed Spending requests and federal grants. Douglas County has experienced significant growth, both in residential and commercial development, which has led to increasing demands on our transportation system, public utilities, and overall infrastructure. While we will have additional requests, widening Highway 85 and also addressing the Happy Canyon, Lincoln Avenue, and Crystal Valley Ranch interchanges on I-25 are immediate priorities. By addressing these critical infrastructure needs, we can ensure that Douglas County

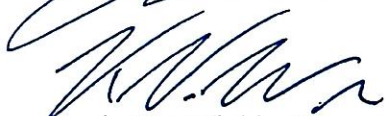
remains a desirable place to live, work, and raise a family. We look forward to working with your office to explore potential funding opportunities that support our county's needs and important projects.

Thank you again for your time, thoughtful discussion, and willingness to work alongside us to address important County matters. We look forward to future efforts and collaboration.

Sincerely,

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Abe Layden, Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Van Winkle', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Kevin Van Winkle, Commissioner

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'George Brauchler', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

George Brauchler, District Attorney

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'George Teal', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

George Teal, Commissioner

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Darren Weekly', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Darren Weekly, Sheriff