
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
 Ninth Judicial District
Serving Garfield, Pitkin, and Rio Blanco Counties
 Jefferson-Jeff Cheney
 District Attorney

109 Eighth Street, Suite 308
 Glenwood Springs, Colorado 81601

Telephone: 970-945-8635
 Facsimile: 970-945-1304

Re: Senate Bill 20-172

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee:

The Office of the District Attorney for the 9th Judicial District respectfully requests and humbly seeks your opposition of SB 20-172.

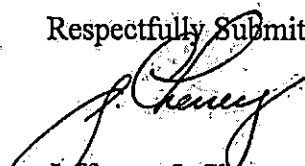
The 9th Judicial District spans from the Continental Divide to Utah, and includes Pitkin, Garfield, and Rio Blanco Counties. Within the jurisdiction, the Office of the District Attorney staffs five courthouses, including Rangely, Meeker, Rifle, Glenwood Springs, and Aspen. The staffing demands of each of the offices are unique and includes one attorney and one support staff employee for one courthouse, and two attorneys and one support staff for another. By passing SB 20-172, an unreasonable strain will be placed on the 9th Judicial District Attorney's Office.

SB 20-172 is not a one size fits all model that can work across the state's jurisdictions, rural or metropolitan. Should SB 20-172 be passed, Rio Blanco County would have one attorney, one support staff, and one investigator to handle advisements up to 7 days a week, including holidays. If SB 20-172 were passed Pitkin County would have two attorneys, two support staff, and one investigator to handle advisements up to 7 days a week, including holidays.

Unfortunately, SB 20-172 does not identify the very real local fiscal impact of a jurisdiction that encompasses five courthouses and three counties. While the bill attempts to bridge this gap via information technology grants, the Office of the District Attorney would still need to staff the courthouses. This would require additional full-time personnel for which we do not have budget authorization. These employees include additional attorneys to argue for the appropriate bonds, additional legal assistants to cull court records and offense reports, additional investigators to obtain criminal histories and other background information, and additional victim-witness specialists to connect with victims of crimes and provide education and resources available to them.

Consequently, the 9th Judicial District Attorney's Office opposes SB 20-172 and respectfully requests you join in opposition.

Respectfully Submitted,


 Jefferson J. Cheney
 District Attorney