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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **COLORADO COUNTIES SPEAK OUT: CHANGE REPRESENTATION IN ONE OF COLORADO'S LEGISLATIVE HOUSES**

WELD COUNTY, CO – Last Friday at their annual legislative meeting, county commissioners throughout Colorado spoke loud and clear when they demanded citizens be heard and have an equal voice; citing rural Colorado no longer has a voice at the legislature.

Phillips County Administrator, Randy Schafer, spoke on behalf of his Board of County Commissioners and explained the impetus behind what has been called the Phillips County Proposal. "We want an equal voice, equal vote and equal representation," Schafer said.

Commissioners from Montezuma, Morgan, Montrose, Yuma, Moffat, Grand, Alamosa and Sedgwick counties, spoke of the frustration and disconnect rural Coloradoans feel from state government that's become oppressive.

"The city and county of Denver has more representatives than all of the Western Slope," stated Mesa County Commissioner Steve Acquafresca, in his plea to fellow commissioners to support the proposal.

Colorado Counties Inc. (CCI) staff was directed to find a sponsor for a bill to have the Colorado Legislature refer a constitutional amendment to the ballot. The amendment would change the representation in one of the state's legislative houses from being population based to having one representative from each county. Currently both houses of the Colorado legislature are population based, leaving rural Colorado at a disadvantage.

Additionally, in response to SB13-252, Weld County Commissioners Barbara Kirkmeyer and Sean Conway lead the charge to add a new policy to CCI's Policy Statement. The statement guides CCI staff and serves as a guide to county commissioners as they debate issues and take a 'CCI position.' The new statement reads, "CCI opposes **renewable energy** mandates that will result in undue hardship to rural and agricultural users."

Commissioner Kirkmeyer stated that the doubling of the renewable energy mandate on rural areas of the state, while exempting municipal utilities, is appalling and deliberately penalizes agriculture. Commissioner Conway added, " We are against mandates, especially when they result in higher electricity costs for our rural communities and agriculture users

*CCI is a non-profit, membership association whose purpose is to offer assistance to county commissioners and to encourage counties to work together on common issues. Its focus is on information, education and legislative representation. CCI presents a united voice to the Colorado General Assembly and other government and regulatory bodies to help shape the future of Colorado.*

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